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Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh, Éire
University College Cork, Ireland

'Gender and Metadiscourse in British and Saudi Newspaper Column Writing: Male / Female and Native / Non-native Differences in Language Use'

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The Thesis is Submitted to University College Cork for the

Degree of PhD in Applied Linguistics

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December 2016

Vol. **I**

Abstract

The topic of gender differences has proved to be a popular line of inquiry for language and gender researchers for decades, and the recent growing interest in the pervasive phenomenon of metadiscourse makes it a major domain in the research of discourse analysis and corpus-based analyses. This study extends the investigation of gender and metadiscourse to newspaper opinion columns. The study seeks to explore both gender and metadiscourse in written media texts by analyzing a corpus of British and Saudi newspaper opinion columns. Using corpus-linguistics techniques, the study aims to investigate gender differences in the opinion writings of men and women columnists regarding their use of metadiscourse and selected linguistic and stylistic features. Drawing on Hyland's (2005) model of metadiscourse, the study further aims to compare the use of metadiscourse markers among British and Saudi columnists in order to identify which metadiscourse categories predominate in this type of newspaper discourse and how they are distributed according to cross-cultural preferences. The corpus consists of 320 opinion columns totaling 273,773 words, 160 columns written by British writers and 160 columns by Saudi writers selected from four elite newspapers, the British *The Times* and *The Guardian*, and the Saudi ones *The Saudi Gazette* and *The Arab News*. The 320 columns were searched electronically using concordancing software programs and then all the metadiscourse devices were examined qualitatively in context to determine their actual functions. All frequencies reported have been normalized per 1,000 words to allow for accurate comparisons and tested statistically. Results confirmed that there were 33,854 metadiscourse tokens in the corpus, an average of 105.49 occurrences per opinion column or 3 elements of metadiscourse in every 25 words in each of the two corpora: British and Saudi. Findings revealed both male and female columnists in both groups showed more similarities than differences in their overall use of metadiscourse especially in the interactive dimension. In spite of that, some statistical significant gender-based variations among columnists in the use of interactional dimension of metadiscourse were also found. Female columnists used more self-mentions, more engagement markers, more adjectives, more pronouns, and more adverbs than their male counterparts, and tended to adopt a personalized engaging subjective style that relies on personal experiences in their writing about domesticity, family, and 'feminine' concerns. In contrast, male columnists used more hedges, verbs, numerical terms, swear words, articles, and prepositions, and tended to adopt a more factual informative style and provide more verifiable information to support their arguments in their texts about politics, economies, education, sports, and other masculine topics. In addition, results revealed that British and Saudi columnists made use of both interactive and interactional metadiscourse, and some statistically significant variations in the amount and type of metadiscourse were reported. The study reported that metadiscourse is a useful concept in the journalistic discourse of opinion columns because, through its devices, it helps to expose the presence of a writer, organize the text, facilitate communication, aid comprehension, and allow the writer to build a relationship with readers. The study concludes that gender is a significant source of variation that influences the linguistic and the stylistic choices of opinion columnists along with the genre's conventions.

To My Beloved Father

(May He Rest in Heaven)

Acknowledgments

This thesis owes its existence to the help, support, and inspiration of many people. In the first place, I would like to express my infinite gratitude, sincere appreciation, and profound thanks to my supervisor and Head of the French Department at University College Cork ***Dr. Martin Howard*** for his supervision, advice, and guidance through my years as a graduate student. It has been an honor to be his M.A. and Ph.D. student. I am forever indebted to him for his continuous help, competent guidance, generous time, deep commitment and unfailing encouragement throughout this study. Above all and the most needed, he provided me unflinching encouragements and indispensable support. Words cannot sufficiently express my everlasting indebtedness and great appreciation to him. My sincere thanks also go to ***Dr. Elisabeth Okasha*** for her moral support, invaluable advice, and generous help. In the process of research and writing, I have been greatly helped by a large number of library staff, so my thanks go to those workers between the books in Boole Library, University College Cork, Ireland.

I feel a deep sense of gratitude for my late father and my beloved mother who formed part of my vision and taught me the good things that really matter in life. The happy memory of my father still provides a persistent inspiration for my journey in this life. I owe special thanks to my mother for her tremendous love and sincere praying. I am also grateful to my five sisters, for rendering me the sense and the value of sisterhood. My deepest thanks go to my siblings in Dublin ***Mohammed*** and ***Amjad*** for their heartfelt encouragement and continuous genuine care.

I am very grateful to my very dear loving husband ***Khalid Al-Subhi***, for his love, care and patience during the period of my scholarship. All words fail to express my sincere love and my everlasting gratitude for him for being extremely supportive, patient, loving, undemanding, and for making it possible to complete this study. He has left his family, country and job to stand by me for five years. One of the best experiences that we lived through in this period in Ireland was the birth of our son ***Mohammed***, who provided an additional and joyful dimension to our life mission. Thanks also go to my adorable daughters, ***Rose*** and ***Retal***, and my son ***Waleed*** who have been a great source of strength and inspiration. Special thanks are also due to my mother-in-law for her constant love and prayers. I am forever indebted to my wholehearted friend ***Mrs. Wejdan Al-Sadi*** for her motivational support, continued encouragement, and useful suggestions. My deep gratitude goes to her for standing by me in good and bad times and for being there to listen when I needed an ear.

The most heartfelt thanks go to my dear Saudi friends in Cork: ***Mai Kamal, Hind Al-Sufyan***, ***Arwa Al-Sufyan***, ***Dr. Sharifa Al-Shehri***, ***Athari Al-Enazi***, ***Al-Anoond Al-Khraije*** for their spiritual support, thoughtful advice, and willingness to help. Finally, I would like to thank everybody who helped on way or the other to make this thesis a reality.

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List of Abbreviations

CA.....Conversational Analysis

CDA..... Critical Discourse Analysis

DF.....Degree of Freedom

F.....Frequency

M .....Male

F.....Female

Fig..... .....Figure

MD.....Metadiscourse

Mrks..... .....Markers

No. .... Number

P.....Percentage

Thesis Structure

Three decades of language and gender studies and the influence of gender on language remains a point of major interest to many linguists in various types of written discourses. Similarly, recent academic writing research shows a growing interest in metadiscourse and the concept of metadiscourse has been a major area of investigation in various written discourses. Metadiscourse is a ubiquitous aspect of our everyday language, and a major feature of the ways we communicate in a range of genres and settings (Hyland, 1997). Metadiscourse is self-reflective linguistic material referring to the evolving text and to the writer and to the imagined reader of that text. It is based on a view of writing "as a social engagement and reveals the ways writers signal their attitudes towards both their content and the audience of the text"(Hyland *et al*., 2012, p.37). Focusing on metadiscourse features, this study examined the similarities and differences in the linguistic and the stylistic practices of male and female columnists in British and Saudi press. This study is divided into 9 chapters and organized as follows:

Chapter one provides a historical view and a thorough orientation in the interdisciplinary field of language and gender, beginning with key concepts in the field and continuing with the major approaches to the study of language and gender. A large part of the chapter is devoted to the vast growing literature on language and gender in both forms of language (spoken and written) and a wide range of gender studies and current research in different contexts is presented. Chapter one also highlights gender stereotypes and the linguistic features of women's and men's language.

Chapter two comprehensively explores the complex relation that exists between gender and the media world as media plays an influential role in shaping our views about gender. Chapter two presents a broad overview of how gender has its place in media discourse and touches on a number of issues such as gender inequality, media portrayals of men and women, under-representation of women, and gender polarized messages. The majority of the chapter is devoted to a comprehensive review of the literature on media and gender research from a broad range of conceptual and methodological approaches. The chapter also presents key theoretical perspectives and analytical frameworks in media discourse. The chapter ends with addressing the genre of opinion column and reviews related literature.

Chapter three is largely devoted to the concept of metadiscourse. The chapter covers major theoretical constructs and terms of metadiscourse and provides a general background about metadiscourse definitions, devices, and taxonomies. It also gives a historical review of models and classifications of metadiscourse. Chapter three reviews in some detail a wide range of metadiscourse research which investigates metadiscourse in academic and media discourse, in addition to other comparative, cross-cultural and gender studies of metadiscourse.

Chapter four is devoted to the design and the goals of the study. It presents the analytical framework and research procedures utilized in the study. It describes fully the data collection, and data analysis, and the linguistic and the statistical analyses used. It provides essential information about the analytical tools and the tests used. It also presents in some details Hyland's model of metadiscourse (2005), which was adopted in the study. The chapter concludes with a short description of the British and Saudi newspapers and discusses briefly the status of English in Saudi Arabia.

Chapters five, six, and seven present in details the results and the main findings of the quantitative analyses of metadiscourse devices and selected linguistic features in the journalistic discourse of opinion columns. Numerical and tabular presentations of the results of the quantitative and the statistical analyses of all the categories of metadiscourse in British and Saudi corpus are presented.

Chapters eight and nine discuss in detail the key results obtained from the quantitative and statistical analyses of gender and metadiscourse in both corpora: British and Saudi. The results were connected to the existing literature on language and gender, metadiscourse, and media discourse. Interpretations that account for variation across gender or across the two groups investigated are offered.

The last section gives final conclusions that highlight the key findings of the study. Contribution of the study, and suggestions for further/future research are also presented. Finally, there are references. The set of appendices that contain short biography of columnists, list of opinion columns, and analyses of metadiscourse devices is provided in a separate volume.

I. Chapter One

Language and Gender

> Women and men are different because language positions us differently. In this view, subjectivity –our sense of selves- is something constructed, not pregiven and our gender identities are not fixed. We take up positions in our enactment of discourse practices so our identities are constructed moment by moment.
>
> *(Talbot 1998, p.144)*

1.0. Introduction

'Language and Gender' or 'Gender and Language' (also referred to as Feminist Linguistics) is one of the most exciting and highly diverse areas within the field of sociolinguistics. It has been a rapidly increasing field of study that has both academic and popular appeal. According to Unger (2004), the study of language and gender has always been "an interdisciplinary field with theory and research coming from communication, linguistics, anthropology, history, literary studies, philosophy and psychology" (p. 228). Though it emerged from the field of sociolinguistics, the study of language and gender also has links with discourse analysis, language change, stylistics, pragmatics, literacy, history of language, and historical and descriptive linguistics. Sunderland (2006) states that, "current gender and language study crosses the boundaries of linguistics into women's studies, queer studies, literature, cultural and media studies, politics, history, religious studies, education, law and management, and even natural sciences" (p. 56).

The field of language and gender was marked by the publication of Robin Lakoff's landmark article and later a book entitled *Language and Women's Place* in 1975. Lakoff's work created a huge fuss but stimulated decades of research on language and gender. According to Baxter (2011), her work has aroused huge interest among applied linguists both on ethnographic and ideological grounds. "Ethnographically, linguists were keen to gather authentic data to explore and explain folk-linguistic beliefs that males and females speak and act differently. Ideologically, language and gender scholars aimed to show that language was a primary means of constructing gender differences, and at times hierarchies and inequalities between men and women" (Baxter, 2011, p. 331). Consequently, two major strands of research on language and

gender emerged: first, how men and women use language, and second, how men and women are represented in language.

Today, the area of language and gender is considered to be one of the most dynamic fields in sociolinguistics. It is characterized by many theoretical debates on the relationship of language and gender. It continues to flourish with the launching of the International Gender and Language Association in 1999, which holds biennial conferences, and has published the journal of *Language and Gender* since 2007 (Gee and Handford, 2013, p. 90).

This chapter provides an overview of the historical background to the study of language and gender including the theoretical debates and current trends associated with the field. It also introduces key theoretical approaches to the study of language and gender and shows how these approaches focus on how men and women use language differently. More importantly, it presents some of the vast and the growing literature on language and gender in both forms of language (spoken and written). Furthermore, it sheds light on the linguistic features of women's and men's language and describes some of the basic terms of the field such as gender, gender and sex, and gender stereotypes.

1.1. Theoretical Considerations of Language and Gender

1.1.1. Gender

Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003) state that, "gender is ever-present in conversation, humor, and conflict, and it is called upon to explain everything from driving styles to food preferences. It is embedded so thoroughly in our institutions, our

actions, our beliefs, and our desires that it appears to us to be completely natural" (p. 9). The term 'gender' is derived from a Latin noun meaning class or kind and referred to the divisions of Greek nouns into masculine, feminine, and neuter (Simon, 2004, p. 17). Traditionally, the term 'gender' was used as a grammatical category, but in recent years the term has been used to draw attention to the social construction of sex differences (Siann, 2013, p.6). According to Bruni *et al*. (2004), the term 'gender' was invented by feminists in the mid 1970s to give form, substance, and visibility to women's experiences. They also used the term to refer to the construction of the categories of 'masculine' and 'feminine' in society (Sadiqi, 2003, p. 4).

Jacobs and Roberts (1989) provided a comprehensive definition of gender: "Gender is the sociocultural designation of biobehavioral psychosocial qualities of the sexes; for example, woman (female), man (male), others. Notions of gender are culturally specific and depend on the ways in which cultures define and differentiate human and other potentials and possibilities" (p. 439). Spade and Valentine (2008) define gender as "the meanings, practices, and relations of femininity and masculinity that people create as they go about their daily lives in different social settings" (p.13). According to Choudhury (2012), most of the definitions of gender emphasize three points: "First, gender is a socially constructed concept; second, culture influences gender; and third, the nature of gender definitions varies among cultures and can alter over time" (p.27).

Nonetheless, gender today "evokes not just debate, but often hot debate and it occasionally rises to an international platform" (Bolich, 2007, p.8).

1.1.2. Gender and Sex

The terms 'gender' and 'sex' are closely interwoven and often used interchangeably. According to Bolin and Whelehan (1999), in the 1970's research, the terms gender and sex were collapsed and mixed together until the early 1980s when successful efforts were made at separation and redefinition (p.34). Generally, language and gender scholars have made a distinction between gender and sex and it is universally accepted. According to this distinction, sex belongs to a biological category and gender belongs to a cultural social category.

Litosseliti (2006) states that "*sex* refers to biological maleness and femaleness or the physiological, functional, anatomical differences that distinguish men and women, whereas *gender* refers to the traits assigned to a sex, what maleness and femaleness stand for within different societies and cultures" (p.11). Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003) argue that sex is a biological categorization based primarily on productive potential, whereas gender is the social elaboration of biological sex. They explain that gender is a learned behavior that is both taught and enforced. From a historical perspective, gender as a technical term is much younger than the technical term sex (Haig, 2004). However, *gender* became the standard term for cultural distinctions between men and women and *sex* the standard term for biological distinctions (Fiske *et al*., 2010).

1.1.3. Gender Stereotypes

Gender stereotypes can be defined as a set of beliefs about what it means to be female or male. They include information about physical appearance, attitudes and

interests, psychological traits, social relations, and occupations (Golombok and Fivush, 1994). Gender stereotypes can also be seen as shared patterns of thinking within a particular society and culture. According to Tierney (1999), gender stereotypes influence information processing and overt behaviour, influence how we form impressions of others, and are resistant to change. Gender stereotypes can be either positive or negative (Schneider, 2005). For example, stereotypes about women in Moroccan culture are more negative than positive. Men exhibit a positive attitude towards mothers and good wives, but a negative attitude towards 'female leader', 'female religious interlocutor', and 'female social adviser' (Sadiqi, 2003).

Gender stereotypes are so pervasive that they extend to a wide range of human behaviour (Barnett and Rivers, 2004; Kite *et al*., 2008). For example, most people believe that males attain higher grades than females in math classes, although some females are better. People also assume that male leaders are more effective than female leaders (Matlin, 2011). Most of these cultural stereotypes and assumptions are commonly repeated in media portrayals of men and women (Blaine, 2007). Some of these stereotypical beliefs are displayed in Table (1).

Table 1. *Traits in the Cultural Stereotype of Men and Women*

Men		Women	
Positive Traits	Negative Traits	Positive Traits	Negative Traits
Independent	Egotistical	Helpful	Spineless
Self-confident	Hostile	Aware of other's feelings	Gullible
Competitive	Cynical	Warm to others	Servile
Stand up under pressure	Arrogant	Gentle	Subordinate self to others
Active	Boastful	Emotional	Whining
Make decisions easily	Greedy	Devoted to others	Complaining
Never give up easily	Dictatorial	Kind	Nagging
Feel superior	Unprincipled	Understanding	Fussy

Note: from Spence, J. T., Helmreich, R. L., & Holohan, C. K. (1979). Negative and positive components of psychological masculinity and femininity and their relationships to self-reports of neurotic and acting out behaviors. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *37*, 1673-1682.

Gender stereotypes are often related to culture, race, class, age, and ability. For example, in many European nations, especially the United Kingdom, US American men are stereotyped as brash, ignorant, self-centered, and obese, while American women are perceived as rich and spoiled (Reisinger and Dimanche, 2010). Asian men have been also stereotyped as law-abiding, intelligent, and hardworking individuals, whereas women are perceived as passive, silent, and submissive (Tewari and Alvarez,

2012). Similarly, German men are stereotyped as aloof, cold, precise, and punctual, whereas German women are conservative and humorless; French men as good lovers and French women as elegant; Italian men as criminals and Italian women as good mothers; and Arab men as billionaires and Arab women as victims and powerless (Reisinger and Dimanche, 2010). Despite these different views of stereotypic traits, research reported striking cross-cultural similarities on the content of gender stereotypes (Worell, 2001). Rudman and Glick (2012) stated that "cross-cultural studies of gender stereotypes indicate that people across the globe associate men with agency, power, and dominance, and women with nurturance, succorance, and deference" (p.94). These strong similarities suggest "a degree of psychological unity, or species-typicality of humans that transcends geographical, racial, political, ethnic, and sexual diversity" (Buss, 1994, p.249).

1.1.4. Men's Language

Over the last few decades, men's language has been seen as the norm. It reflects authority, dominance, and power (Bayraktaroğlu and Sifianou, 2001). Men have been viewed as 'oppressors' who ruled language, forcing women into submissive speech or even into silence (Hendricks and Oliver, 1999, p. 82). Dale Spender (1980) claimed that "the English language has been literally man made and that it is primarily under male control" (p.12). An early description of men's language was associated with Jesperson (1922). He described men's language as having identified linguistic innovation, slang usage, more vernacular forms. Men use talk to establish and defend their personal status and ideas. They also support each other by not interrupting or criticizing (Barrett and Davidson, 2006). Sause (1976) described boys' oral language as having more references to aggression, time, space, quantity, and acts of physical

movements. Payne (2001) stated that men's language is characterized by "profanity, dominating speech, straight-to-the-point wording, forcefulness, aggressiveness, bluntness, and ideas represented by a sense of humor" (p.106). Mulac *et al*., (1986) examined gendered-linked language and found that male public speakers used more first-singular personal pronouns, focused on the present rather than the past or the future, and used the active voice. According to them, men had a low level of concern with formal linguistic standards and showed a high level of concern with holding the floor.

Other features are recognized by Case (1994). According to him, the goals of men's talk involve exerting control, preserving independence, and enhancing status. Wood (2007) described masculine styles of language as having more words and phrases of status such as "*I know that*" and " *My experience tells me this*", words of problem solving and advice giving such as " *You should ...*" and "*The way you should handle this is…*", and showing assertiveness and control of speaking. Masculine styles of speaking also favour theoretical or general discussion and avoid giving personal information (Wood, 2007).

Notwithstanding such characteristics, studies analyzing men's conversational practices are few (McIlvenny, 2002). Some of these studies are Cameron (1997), Johnson and Finlay (1997), and Coates (1997a). Cameron studied the speech of five young male friends while they watched sports on television and found that men do gossip. She suggested that 'sportstalk' is typically a masculine conversational genre and besides, those men also talked about topics stereotypically associated with all men talk such as *women* and *alcohol*.

Johnson and Finlay (1997) also questioned gossip in males' speech about football. They argued that the discourse genre of gossip is used by men to create solidarity within their own gender group. Similarly, Coates (1997a) analyzed 17 and half hours of British men's conversations and suggested that the linguistic choices of men are influenced by the 'expertism' factor. According to her, this male speech is characterized by a series of monologues in which the speaker 'plays the expert' gaining the floor for an extended period to talk on his area of expertise.

Wetherell and Nigel Edley (1999) provided a study of masculine identities of British men. Using interview data, they investigated how men create and incorporate the social identity of being a man in their talk. They identified three specific 'imaginary positions and psyche discursive practices' in negotiating hegemonic masculinity: *heroic positions*, *ordinary positions*, and *rebellious positions*. In the first position, men aligned themselves with the standard masculine ideals. In the second position, men described themselves as normal and average guys. In the final position, men "define themselves in terms of their unconventionality and the imaginary positions involve the flaunting of social expectations" (p.347). Within this position, men reported that they did cry, cook, knit, wear jewelry and so on.

1.1.5. Women's Language

Women's language, particularly women's language as deficit, has been associated with negative cultural beliefs and popular stereotypes such as how talkative women are or how trivial is their speech. Numerous examples of these can be found in literature, proverbs, and the media until today. According to Weatherall (2002), written records of proverbs about women's speech deal not only with their supposed garrulousness

such as "*a woman's tongue wags like a lamb's tail*", but also with their proclivity to gossip as "*tell nothing to a woman unless you would have the world know*" (p. 56).

Scholarly investigations of feminist linguistics had led to the construction of some of the most discussed notions such as "women's language" and "feminine style" (Lakoff 1975, Spender 1980, and Bucholtz 2004). Women's language has been constructed as a gender-marked linguistic variety of female speakers. According to Crawford (1995), what is meant by women's language is "a system of sex linked linguistic signals, a set of features used by both sexes but more by women than men" (p.22). Inoue (2006), states that women's language is "a set of linguistic forms and functions of language exclusively or statistically used by women and very associated with feminine demeanors, roles, attributes such as being soft-spoken, polite, hesitant, emphatic, gentle, and nonassertive" (p.2).

Many language and gender studies have investigated women's language and found interesting features of this variety in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Scholars and researchers have coined several terms for this variety such as 'women's language' (Lakoff 1975), 'the female register' (Crosby and Nyquist 1977), 'genderlect' (Kramer 1974), and 'gender-linked language' (Mulac *et al*., 1986). One of the earliest examinations of women's language is found in the work of Jespersen's (1922) *Language: its nature, development, and origins* in which a whole chapter is dedicated to 'the woman'. According to him, women have a less extensive vocabulary than men, have less complex sentence constructions, and speak with little prior thought and hence often leave their sentences incomplete (p. 273- 254).

Other classical studies carried out by Trudgill (1974) in Britain and Labov (1972) in North America examined the use of prestige forms in pronunciation. These studies concluded women tend to use more prestigious and standard forms in their speech. Gordon (1994) also asserted this belief by arguing that "in societies where there is social stratification which is represented in speech, women tend to use more of the standard or prestige variants than men. In formal situations women seem to style-shift more dramatically than men" (p. 215). The reason behind the use of correct linguistic forms is the fact that women are more prestige conscious (Lakoff 1975; Trudgill 1983; Labov 1990).

The notion of "women's language" has been often associated with Lakoff (1975) as the term "women's language" was introduced in her groundbreaking work *Language and Women's Place* (1975). She argued that 'women's language' is a distinctive feminine register that is different from 'men's language' and "shows up in all levels of the grammar of English" (p. 49). In her view, this language is characterized by specific linguistic features such as the use of overly polite forms, the use of tag questions, the avoidance of expletives, a great use of diminutives and euphemisms, the use of more hedges and mitigating devices, and the use of particular vocabulary items such as 'adorable', 'charming', and 'sweet'. She believed that this women's language is a result of a linguistic discrimination. She argued that women experience this linguistic discrimination in two ways: "in the way they are taught to use language, and in the way general language use treats them" (Lakoff, 1975, p.4).

In her (1990) work *Talking Power*, Lakoff introduced an updated list of features characterizing women's language (p.204):

1. Women often seem to hit phonetic points less precisely than men: lisped ‘s’s, obscured vowels.
2. Women’s intonational contours display more variety than men’s.
3. Women use diminutives and euphemism more than men.
4. Women make more use of expressive forms (adjectives and not nouns or verbs and, in that category, those expressing emotional rather than intellectual evaluation) than men: *lovely, divine*.
5. Women use forms that convey impreciseness: *so, such*.
6. Women use hedges of all kinds (‘*Well*…’, ‘*I don’t really know*, *but maybe* …’) more than men.
7. Women use intonation patterns that resemble questions, indicating uncertainty or need for approval.
8. Women’s voices are breathier than men’s.
9. Women are more indirect and polite than men.
10. Women will not commit themselves to an opinion.
11. In conversations, women are more likely to be interrupted, less likely to introduce successful topics.
12. Women’s communicative style tends to be collaborative rather than competitive.
13. More of women’s communication is expressed nonverbally (by gesture and intonation) than men’s.
14. Women are more careful to be ‘correct’ when they speak, using better grammar and fewer colloquialisms than men.

Crosby and Nyquist (1977) conducted a series of empirical studies based on Lakoff's hypothesis of women's language. They found that women do exhibit a female style in their speech more than men. They indicated that female speakers did indeed employ more hedging devices such as 'and stuff' and 'I guess'.

Fishman (1980) agreed with Lakoff in her study of conversations among heterosexual groups. She argued that women use more questions, use more backchannel support and do most of the conversational work, which she referred to as 'the interactional shitwork' (Fishman, 1983).

McEdwards (1985) stated that "women are taught to speak softly, to avoid contradicting others, to be submissive in communication, to avoid linguistic assertion and aggression and to be aware of giving cues of strong self-confidence" (p. 40).

Regarding vocabulary, as stated by Vinnicombe *et al*., (2013), women use more words related to social and psychological processes; positive and negative emotions; hearing, feeling and sensing words; more causal words like 'because'; more modal words like 'would', 'should', and 'could'; and more references to other people (p. 249). Women also use more verbs and pronouns, especially 'I'. (King and Knight, 2011).

Finally, if there were such a thing as 'men's language' and 'women's language', many similarities still would exist. According to Harriman (1996), some generalizations are allowable about gender differences in content, linguistic, and syntax:

- Women's speech tends to more person-centered, more concerned with inter-personal matters, to deal more with the feelings of both the speaker and the listener, to be more polite, and more indirect. It employs more fillers, qualifiers, disclaimers, and other softening devices to avoid strong or direct statements (Harriman, 1996).
- Men's speech tends to be more concerned with external things and to involve more factual communication. It is more literal and direct, employs stronger statements and stronger language, and tends to exert power over the listener (Eakins & Eakins, 1978).

However, the question of whether there is indeed men's language and women's language remained unresolved due to lack of strong empirical evidence. Gal (1995) argued that categories of 'women's speech' and 'men's speech' along with broader ones as *feminine* and *masculine* are not empirical constructs but rather symbolic-ideological ones. They become symbolically associated with cultural ideas about masculinities and femininities and serve as social/cultural resources for the enactment of gender.

The previous sections have presented some key theoretical notions in the field of language and gender such as gender, gender and sex, gender stereotypes, men's language, and women's language. The following sections survey a number of theoretical approaches which scholars and linguists have drawn upon and developed for the study of the interplay between language and gender.

1.2. Key Approaches on Language and Gender Research

The overall historical environment of the mid-1970s was favourable to the emergence of gender studies. The women's liberation movement, the anti-Vietnam movement, and communist-socialist ideology gave rise initially to research of language and gender (Smith, 2008, p.444). From 1973 to the end of the twentieth century, language and gender research was dominated by three early major theories that are still highly influential, each of which emphasized the notion of a gender dichotomy (Holmes and Meyerhoff, 2008; Baxter, 2011). These are: *deficit*, *dominance*, and *difference* theories.

Cameron (1992) asserted that science of language and gender is separated according to these three categories. She argued that all research in this area could be positioned in one of these three hypotheses. "The hypotheses arise for different convictions regarding female's use of language and the explanations for possible differences between male's and female's technique of expressing themselves" (Regber, 2009, p.2). 'Deficit' describes women's language as weak, lacking, and deficient (Simpson and Mayr, 2013, p.17). 'Dominance' describes men's dominance over women's in language use and sees women as being in a powerless position in their interactions with men (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003). 'Difference' describes differences in how men and women communicate and how they adopt different agendas or have learned different ways of interacting (Unger, 2004). Recently, the field has mostly moved on from merely trying to catalogue differences to research methods that are based on a social constructionist view (Unger, 2004). The following sections present these various approaches to language and gender research.

1.2.1. The Deficit Approach

As its name indicates, the 'deficit' approach considered women's language as an essentially deficient version of men's language (Sadiqi, 2003, p.4). According to Bhatia and Ritchie (2006), women are seen in the deficit framework as a muted group of inferior language users who speak a powerless language. This outdated approach regards women's language as limited in vocabulary, simpler in structure, and lacking in substance (Pearce, 2007).

This approach dated back to 1920s, to the work of the Danish linguist Otto Jespersen. Jespersen declared that women's speech is trivial and thereby deficient and inferior to that of men. He also demonstrated that women were linguistically quicker than men and this is due to women's intellectual inferiority (Krolokke and Sorensen, 2006, p.64).

A half century later, Robin Lakoff (1975) in a pioneering work established what is known as 'women's language'. According to Juschka (2001), Lakoff's work suggests "that women are disadvantaged relative to men by a basically inferior, less forceful women's language which they learn though socialization" (p.36). Lakoff claimed that this weakness can be seen in certain features that are typical of women's speech: "their empty vocabulary; the choice of adjectives such as 'lovely' and 'adorable'; the choice of colours such as 'beige' and 'lavender'; their weaker expletives; their trivial subject matter; and their tendency to be over polite" (Litosseliti, 2006, p. 28).

The deficit approach has been severely criticized by a number of scholars, such as Cameron, McAlinden and O'Leary 1988; Holmes 1995; O'Barr and Atkins 1980, "for assuming a male as norm language standard and thus problematizing women, for treating women as an undifferentiated group, and for postulating a one to one mapping between linguistic phenomena and their meaning" (Pavlenko, 2001, p.18).

1.2.2. The Dominance Approach

The dominance approach is another contextualized approach to understanding gender difference that recognizes the connection between gender and power (Hare-Mustin and Marecek, 1994). The dominance approach argues that women's language is different from men's because women have been denied access to the powerful language, (men's language) (Cameron, 1992; Fishman, 1978; McConnell-Ginet, 1988; O'Barr and Atkins, 1980; Zimmerman and West, 1975). It highlights "how the considerable economic power that men have over women in society permeates into language, resulting in male domination in spoken interaction" (Barrett and Davidson, 2007, p. 97).

The dominance approach was based on empirical evidence (analysis of conversations in natural settings and laboratories), whereas the deficit approach relied almost exclusively on introspection (Sadiqi, 2003, p.6). Findings of studies in this framework have supported male dominance and female depression. For example, the study of Zimmerman and West (1975) showed that men dominate conversations because they employed interruptions in mixed-gender conversation with considerably greater frequency than women did (Kotthoff and Wodak, 1997). Fishman (1978) showed that men do most of the talking, while women provide the 'interactional shitwork' of being supportive and encouraging listeners (Baxter, 2011). According to Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003), the dominance approach was associated with works like Julia Penelope's *Speaking Freely: Unlearning the Lies of the Fathers' Tongues* (1990), and the earlier and more widely distributed *Man Made Language* by Dale Spender (1980).

Despite the effectiveness of the dominance approach in highlighting the links between language and power, it has some drawbacks. According to Weatherall (2002, p.67), the dominance approach is limited in so far as the effects of power cannot wholly explain why women in some situations appear to use a different speech style from men. It also has encouraged a practice where women are trained to speak like men. In addition, it has intended to ignore how gender interacts with other social groupings such as ethnicity, class and age.

1.2.3. The Difference Approach

The difference approach developed around the mid 1980s and remained popular until the early 1990s (Locher and Graham, 2010). The difference approach suggested that "men and women communicate differently because they follow gender-specific and gender-appropriate interactional styles acquired through socialization since childhood" (Jones *et al*., 2012, p. 420).

The difference approach, also called the two-cultures model, focused on the notion of sociolinguistic subcultures. According to Sadiqi (2003), this notion was based on the assumption that men and women "were not socialized in the same way, girls and boys ended up by acquiring two different sociolinguistic subcultures: the male subculture and the female subculture" (p.10). This approach was represented by the writings of Daniel Maltz and Ruth Borker (1982), and Deborah Tannen (1994,1998). They hypothesized that "men and women used specific distinct verbal strategies and communicative styles which were developed in same-sex childhood peer groups" (Holmes and Meyerhoff, 2008, p.701). The difference approach seems to have been a direct result of women's growing resistance to being treated as a subordinate group

(Llamas *et al*., 2007). Women began to assert that they "had a different voice, a different psychology, a different experience of love, work and the family from men" (Humm, 1989, p. 51). This approach gained more currency with the publications of Deborah Tannen's bestselling book *You Just Don't Understand* (1990) and John Gray's book *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus* (1992) (Van Herk, 2012, p.89). The claims of these books have "seeped steadily into popular consciousness, confirming and enhancing long held folk-linguistic beliefs about the differences in men's and women's speech patterns" (Simpson and Mayr, 2013, p. 20).

The difference approach applies a more positive view to women's language. It allows "women's language to be looked at in its own right, rather than a faulty version of normal language, that is men's language" (Coates, 2013, p.281). However, there have been many critiques of the difference approach by scholars such as Cameron (1992), Crawford (1995), Freed (1992), Talbot (1998), Troemel-Poetz (1991), and Uchida (1992). A major criticism of the approach is that, it ignores "the social inequality and power relations present in intercultural encounters" (Meeuwis and Sarangi, 1994, p.310). According to Henley and Kramarae (1991), Troemel-Poetz (1991), Freed (1992), and Uchida (1992), the difference theory was both a 'separate-but-equal' and an 'assign-no-blame' approach which valorized women's contributions but downplayed social reality where men and women were not equal.

1.2.4. The Social Constructionist Approach

The *social constructionist* approach (Holmes, 2007) or what is called the *dynamic* approach (Coates, 2004) is the most recent framework in the field. It is called dynamic because there is "an emphasis on dynamic aspects of interaction" (Coates,

2004, p.6). It is also referred to as the *postmodern* (Cameron, 2005) or the performative (Butler, 1990) approach. According to this approach, gender is seen as a social construct rather than as a given social category (Llamas *et al*., 2007). As West and Zimmerman (1987) eloquently put it, speakers should be seen as 'doing gender' rather than statically 'being' a particular gender. According to Unger (2004), the term 'doing gender' reflects "the social constructionist view that gender is a salient social and cognitive category through which information is filtered, selectively processed, and differentially acted on to produce self-fulfilling prophecies about men and women" (p. 231).

The dynamic or social constructionist approach stresses the idea that gender is constructed in a social context (Eckert and McConnell 1992, 2003; Coates 2004). Eckert and McConnell (1992) argued that gender is constructed in social practices and it is the product of social interaction. It is "so deeply engrained in our social practice, in our understanding of ourselves and of others, that we almost cannot put one foot in front of the other, without taking gender into consideration" (Eckert and McConnell, 2003, p.17).

The social constructionist approach has been highly influential in recent decades of language and gender research (Mooney *et al*., 2010). It has become a popular way of thinking about the nature and the meaning of gender in education and other institutional contexts (Bank *et al*., 2007). It has tended to dominate gender and language in the workplace studies in recent years (Litosseliti, 2006). Despite this, the social constructionist approach has its critics. One key criticism is related to "its lack of incorporation of biological and evolutionary processes as well as cultural

universal" (Blakemore *et al*., 2008, p.195). Barrett and Davidson (2007) stated that the constructionist model "makes it more difficult to make global statements about women's and men's language, since it allows for variations within the categories 'men' and 'women' and allows for the possibility of contestation and change" (p. 99).

The previous sections have presented an overview of the four key theoretical approaches that dominate the research of language and gender since 1970s: deficit, dominance, difference, and dynamic or social constructionist approach. In the following section, we review a wide range of research studies that have been conducted on language and gender.

1.3. Research on Language and Gender

The 1970s are viewed as the time when linguists started to investigate the interaction between language and gender in "a systematic way and most importantly from an explicitly feminist perspective" (Mills and Mullany, 2011, p.1). According to Litosseliti (2006), language and gender research refers to "cross-disciplinary discussions of both the ways in which language is used by men and women, and the ways in which language is used to say things about men and women" (p. 2). These studies of gender differences in language use were always framed as an examination of "women's language"(Jaspers *et al*., 2010).

However, research on language and gender has covered a wide range of sociolinguistic approaches ranging from variationist studies to social constructionist approaches, along with interactional research. *Variationist studies* were concerned with identifying general 'gender patterns' in the distribution of linguistic features

across social groups using quantitative methods (Mesthrie, 2009). Landmark studies within this framework include Labov (1966), Trudgill (1974), Macaulay (1978), and Newbrook (1982). According to Litosseliti and Sunderland (2002), one of the most important findings of these studies is that women tend to use more standard or prestige features of language and men more non-standard or vernacular features. More recent variationist studies have moved away from large-scale quantitative methods towards "more local contextualized and ethnographic approaches that explore gender as intersecting with other social identities within particular communities of practice" (Baxter, 2011, p. 331). Some of these studies include Eckert (1997), Holmes (1996), Milroy (1980), and Thomas (1988).

In addition to variationist studies, "an increasingly significant amount of modern feminist sociolinguistic research has taken place at the level of interaction" (Mills and Mullany, 2011, p.72). *Interactional studies* focused on the distinctive gendered ways in which people interact in various social and professional contexts (Baxter, 2011). Such investigations were closely associated with the theoretical approaches: deficit, difference, and dominance. Studies of gender and interaction have adopted both quantitative and qualitative methods to study face-to-face interaction and communicative style (Mesthrie *et al.*, 2009). Examples of this approach can be found in the works of Coates (1986), Fishman (1983), West and Zimmerman (1983) and Tannen (1990,1994). Holmes and Stubbe (2003a) provided a list of widely cited features of feminine and masculine interactional styles as presented in Table (2).

Table (2). *Widely Cited Features of Feminine and Masculine Interactional Styles*

FEMININE	MASCULINE
- Facilitative - Supportive Feedback - Conciliatory - Indirect - Collaborative - Minor Contribution (in Public) - Person/ Process oriented - Affectively oriented	- Competitive - Aggressive Interruptions - Confrontational - Direct - Autonomous - Dominates (Public) talking time - Task outcome oriented - Referentially oriented

Note: from Holmes, J. and Stubbe, M. (2003) *Power and Politeness in the Workplace: A Sociolinguistic Analysis of Talk at Work*. Harlow: Pearson (p. 574).

Beside Interactional studies, there have been a significant number of studies that examine gender from an essentialist perspective and that presented it as a natural entity. According to McHugh and Hambaugh (2010), essentialism refers to viewing the use of tentative or dominant speech as trait-like styles that come naturally to women and men, respectively. Essentialism suggested that gender is fixed and rooted in biology and psychology and that there are unchanging, essential aspects of gender which persist through different forms of social organization (Woodward, 2011). Feminist theorists and linguists increasingly reject essentialist perspectives on gender and they advocate a view of gender as a social construction that is performed in a series of interaction and activities (Chrisler and McCreary, 2010). Social constructionist approaches focused on "how language users produce speakers as male or female, construct, orient towards, and use gendered identities in their talk" (Speer, 2005, p. 13). This approach was created through the influential works of Butler (1990), Wodak and Benke (1997), Freed (1996), Ehrlich (2003), McElhinny (2003), Eckert & McConnell Ginet (2003), Cameron (1997) and Sunderland (2004).

Recent work and current thinking on language and gender place emphasis upon gender discourse, gender roles and gender idenitity using the frameworks of discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis. The following sections review key classic and contemporary research conducted in different linguistic contexts in spoken and written language in the field of language and gender.

1.3.1. Gender Studies in Spoken Language

Early Gender Studies

Most studies have examined gender differences in spoken language, though a small body of research "has considered evidence of gender influencing written style" (Baron, 2010, p. 50). The focus of early research on language and gender was generalized gender differences. Lakoff (1975) was one of the earliest studies which examined gender differences in speech. She argued that women use more descriptive adjectives, more polite forms, more hedges and intensifiers, and more tag questions than men do. She asserted that women had been taught to speak like ladies and as a result they became less dominant and insecure in conversations. Her work was based on informal observations and self-reflection, and has been criticized for lacking empirical evidence. Despite this, Lakoff's findings were highly influential and promoted many studies in various fields. For example, O'Barr and Atkins (1980) conducted a study of gender difference in language use in the context of the US courtroom. They analyzed recordings of 150 hours of trail testimony in a state superior criminal court. Their analysis showed that some women exhibited features of women's language described by Lakoff. However, some men also exhibited these features of women's language in their court testimony. Women such as judges, lawyers and witnesses do not use this form of language or what they called 'powerless language'. They concluded that

language differences are based on situation-specific authority or power, but not gender and the tendency for women or men to speak a powerless language is related to women's and men's positions.

Dale Spender (1980) provided a critique of Lakoff's conclusions in her book *Man Made Language.* She argued that men had the power to control the language and determine the norms by which it can be used, and that they attempt to prevent women from talking due to lack of respect for women and as a way of legitimating their own primacy. "In a male supremacist society where women are devalued, their language is devalued to such an extent that they are required to be silent" (Spender, 1980, p. 42-43). She further explained that men use certain linguistic techniques to discourage women from speaking such as interruptions and inattention to topics raised by women. She identified English language as 'man made' as a result of patriarchy, and questioned the role of women themselves in creating their own domination. "It has been the dominant group-in the case, males- who have created the world, invented the categories, construed sexism and its justification, and developed a language trap which is in their interest" (Spender, 1980, p. 142).

Later scholars of language and gender were very "concerned to expose male dominance in all its linguistic forms" (Litosseliti and Sunderland, 2002, p.3). Daniel Maltz and Ruth Borker (1982), Fishman (1983), West and Zimmerman (1983), and Deborah Tannen (1990) were among those scholars who followed this tradition. Daniel Maltz and Ruth Borker (1982) argued for a 'two-cultures' approach of language and gender research in their classic study of children's play. According to them, girls learn to do three things with words: (1), to create and maintain relationships of closeness and

equality; (2), to criticize others in acceptable (indirect) ways; (3), to interpret accurately and sensitively the speech of other girls. In contrast, boys learn to do three different things with words: (1), to assert one's position of dominance; (2), to attract and maintain an audience; (3), to assert oneself when another person has the floor. They claimed that, during childhood socialization, girls and boys learn language behaviour appropriate for their gender by playing in sex-segregated groups. Maltz and Borker concluded that gender segregation of childhood friendship groups leads boys and girls to develop distinct subcultures with different convictions for verbal interaction more generally.

Adapting conversational analytical (CA) framework, Fishman (1983) conducted a study on couples' interaction and private conversations at home. She examined the ways in which conversations are initiated and maintained among them. Her findings showed that women initiated 47 conversations and men 29. Only 17 conversations succeeded out of the 47 topics raised by women, whereas 28 conversations succeeded out of the 29 topics raised by men. According to her, women were more engaged in conversations than men. They asked more questions, used more attention beginnings, "feed men the lines, draw them out, respond to the topic that men determine, and act as their audience" (Fishman, 1983, p.117). Fishman's study "stands as a landmark in the study of male conversational dominance" (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003, p. 112).

West and Zimmerman (1983) investigated the use of interruptions and overlaps in cross-sex conversations between unacquainted college students using CA. They found that 75% of all interruptions were men-initiated and 25% were women-initiated. According to them, these findings clearly show that men are overwhelmingly

dominating. “The fact that females find themselves subject to interruption more frequently than males in cross-sex conversation is not merely an indicator of power. It is a way of doing power in face-to-face interaction, and to the extent that power is implicated in doing what it means to be a man vis-á-vis a woman, it is a way of doing gender as well” (West and Zimmerman, 1983, p.111).

Deborah Tannen in her studies *Talking Voices* (1989), *You Just Do not Understand* (1990), and *Gender and Discourse* (1994) demonstrated that men and women belong to different cultures and therefore they use different speech patterns in their conversations. She characterized women’s conversations as ‘rapport-talk’ and men’s conversation as ‘report-talk’. ‘Report-talk’ is the characteristic of male language and a means of transmitting information, solving problems, and establishing or defending individual status. ‘Report-talk’ can include straightforward reporting, the telling of jokes, and the recounting of stories. In contrast, ‘rapport-talk’ is the characteristic of women’s conversations whose aim is not to inform but to forge connections with others. Tannen wrote: “for most women, conversation is a way of establishing connections and negotiating relationships. Emphasis is placed on displaying similarities and matching experiencing. For most men, talk is primarily a means to preserve independence and negotiate and maintain status in a hierarchical social order” (Tannen, 1990, p. 77). According to her, there are different conversational styles characteristic of men and women. Women seem to use more cooperative strategies, whereas men seem to use more competitive strategies and this can be the cause of their misunderstanding. Tannen further explained these conversational styles by differentiating between symmetrical and asymmetrical relationships. A symmetrical relationship is one that is characterized by cooperation, equality, rapport building,

acceptance, listening, questioning, empathy, explaining problems, encouragement, mutual understanding, complimenting, and negotiating. In contrast, an asymmetrical relationship is characterized by lecturing, giving advice, directing, commanding, evaluating, problem solving, challenging, and competing (Fujishin, 2007). Although Tannen has done extensive research on language and gender and was the author of a series of bestseller books, her work has been subject to severe criticism. She has been criticized for not paying enough attention to fundamental differences in power between men and women (Romaine, 2000). She also has been criticized for overgeneralizing and that she has nuanced her work with the acknowledgment that men and women are different across cultures and across time and that individual men and women vary even within a society (Howell and Paris, 2010).

These studies of gender differences have come under attack from feminists, linguists, and post-structuralists (Brock *et al*., 1989). According to Litosseliti and Sunderland (2002), the idea of 'gender difference' in language use was criticized for several reasons. It underplayed the importance of context, variations and intragroup differences and intergroup overlap. The idea was conservative in rooting out differences rather than investigating and acknowledging similarities (Litosseliti and Sunderland, 2002, p.4). In addition, research of gender differences has "inevitably led to the production of gender stereotypes" (Holmes and Meyerhoff, 2008, p.475).

Social Constructionist Studies

In the 1990s, research of language and gender flourished by a theoretical reorientation of the field towards poststructuralist approaches (Bhatia and Ritchie, 2006). The field has been firmly distanced from gender difference theories and engulfed in a wave of social constructionism emphasizing the diversity of gender

(Baxter, 2011; Holmes, 2007). There were a broad range of themes and issues regarding gender and a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches. One of the most influential works was Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990). Butler drew on Austin's (1962) speech act theory and argued that gender is performatively constituted, that is, "it is naturalized and substantialized only through repeatedly citing normative gendered practices" (Wake and Malpas, 2013, p. 196). For Butler, gender is not a thing we have, but rather something that we do at specific times and in specific circumstances (Wood, 2007). Butler's performative theory of gender became widely popular and has been immensely useful to many different projects on gender (Gardiner, 2002). Alsop *et al*., (2002) stated that, "Butler's theory of performative constitution of gender is widely credited for challenging essentialist understandings of gender, and for placing constructionists ideas firmly on the feminist agenda" (p.94). According to Adams *et al*., (2011), Butler established the idea of identity and gender identity as a culturally specific performance rather than a natural condition.

Inspired by Butler's work, many scholars, especially feminists, started to explore gender from a social constructionist perspective. Social constructionist theorists who adopted this approach "typically engaged in qualitative analysis of discourse paying careful attention to the context of interaction" (Frawley, 2003, p.90). Some influential works include Crawford (1995), Hall and Bucholtz (1995), Bergvall, Bing, and Freed (1996), Johnson and Meinhof (1997), and Kiesling (1998).

Crawford (1995) proposed that adopting this approach would prompt analysts to ask questions about the relationships between gender and language such as 'How people come to have beliefs about sex differences in speech style' and 'How are those beliefs

encoded and enacted in one's self-presentation' (p.18). She maintained that gender is a system of social relations that operates at multiple levels- individual, social-structural- and interactional. According to her, "gender is not an attribute of individuals but a way of making sense of transactions. Gender exists not in persons but in transactions; it is conceptualized as a verb, not a noun" (Crawford, 1995, p.12).

Hall and Bucholtz's (1995) *Gender Articulated* has been profoundly influential in outlining key themes which have informed research in language and gender (Morrish and Sauntson, 2007). According to Hornberger and Corson (1999), their work has provided a collection of essays which illustrate how in some communities, hegemonic constructions of gender are imposed on girls and women through language use; in other communities women demonstrate their agency and use language to resist dominant ideological structures for alternatives that constitute women more favorably; and yet in other communities, women create new social identities that are not determined in advance by existing gender ideologies.

In a similar collection of articles, Bergvall, Bing, and Freed (1996) in *Rethinking Language and Gender Research* challenged earlier research and theories of language and gender. According to Nichols (1999), this collection of articles "signals a change within the profession itself in its re-examination of basic concepts to be taken into account in future research on language and gender" (p. 295). Johnson and Meinhof's (1997) work explored men's communicative practices and linguistic choices. Their work was the first extensive account of male language in the construction of masculinity (Sweetman, 1997). They characterized masculinity and femininity as "on going social processes dependent upon systematic restatements, a process which

variously referred to as ‘performing gender’ or ‘doing identity work’ ” (Johnson and Meinhof, 1997, p. 22). Similarly, Kiesling (1998) analyzed US college fraternity men’s contextual variations in the use of the variable pronunciation of the English suffix ‘ING’ at their weekly meetings. According to Andrew (2012), Kiesling acknowledged the centrality of power to masculine identity, pinpointing two cultural models as the source of male identity construction: the physically powerful, or working-class, cultural role and the structurally, or socioeconomically, powerful cultural role. Kiesling concluded that hegemonic masculinity impels men to construct powerful identities in which they actually or symbolically dominate others.

Within the social constructionist framework, the concept of ‘community of practice’ has developed and has been the current tendency in recent language and gender research. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992), defined community of practice as “an aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in an endeavour. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations, in short, practices emerge in the course of this mutual endeavour” (p. 464). Examples of CofPs given by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet include a choir, a family, a friendship group and an academic department. Within CofPs approach, several studies (Mills, 2003; Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003) have “called the attention to the fact that neither women nor men constitute monolithic groups but that the various aspects of their identities are continually modified during social interaction” (Mondorf, 2004, p. 28).

Mills (2003) focuses on the relationship between language, gender and politeness. She argues that politeness should be viewed as a set of judgments that interlocutors make during interactions, and that politeness emerges within a particular CofPs. She points out that politeness as a gendered concept, with impolite behaviour being stereotypically associated with masculinity, whilst politeness stereotypically associated

with femininity. In the same line, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003) investigate the use of compliments which is usually examined in the study of linguistic politeness. More specifically, they examine the function of compliments and what role complimenting has in constructing gender. They claimed that compliments are gendered speech acts.

Gendered Discourses

In addition to viewing gender as a social-constructed concept and to the CofP approach, the concept of 'gendered discourses' has emerged in the field. Gendered discourses refer to those instances where people talk about or make assumptions about men and women and about what constitute gender appropriate ways of behaving and talking (Schnurr, 2013). Litosseliti (2006), defined gendered discourses as "discourses that represent and (re)constitute, maintain and contest gendered social practices" (p.58). According to her, gendered discourses are articulated by both men and women, in different ways and different situations. These gender discourses carry gender ideologies and are maintained by dominant gendered stereotypes which dictate norms of gender appropriate behaviour (Talbot, 2003).

Sunderland (2004), has coined the term "gender discourses", favouring 'gendered' as a term for it is far stronger than the more descriptive term 'gender-related' (p. 20). She drew attention to the "discourse of gender differences" and considered it as one of the most enduring, overarching examples of a gendered discourse that operates within society (Sunderland, 2004, p. 52). Her work has identified various gender discourses such as 'discourse of fatherhood', 'mother as main parent discourse' and the 'discourse of equal opportunities'.

Another approach that has been influential on language and gender work is Ochs' (1992) theory of indexicality of gender. She conducted a cross-culture study in order to compare communicative practices of motherhood in mainstream US society and Western Samoa. She investigated "how gender ideologies are socialized, sustained and transformed" through verbal practices in the talk of these social groups (p.336). She identifies two types of indexicality: direct and indirect. Direct indexicality can be found in examples of language usage where gender is overtly and explicitly encodes such as the lexical items *boy/girl* or *man/women*. Indirect indexicality of gender is characterized by the fact that interactional styles come to be encoded, thus indexed, with specific gendered meanings. Her model makes "linkages between discourse and gender via an intermediate plane of social stances, acts, and activities" (Chng, 2002, p. 28).

Recent Gender Studies

Recent research shows an increasing interest in discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis (CDA) to explore the construction of gender. Coates (1997b) and Wodak (1997) are some of the research aligned with critical discourse analysis that have examined data from spoken interaction. Coates (1997b) analyzed recorded data of female conversations performing gender. She identified as two competing discourses of femininity a "dominant" maternal discourse, which "says that children are marvelous", as part of which all mothers take pride in their children's achievements and a "subversive" maternal discourse, which includes expression of negative feelings about their children (Coates, 1997b, p. 249). Wodak (1997) conducted a study on doctor-patient interaction using critical discourse analysis. She analyzed the actual discourse between doctors, nurses, patients and relatives in relation to the institutional

context comprising an analysis of roles and events. Her analysis showed certain beliefs about hospital stuff such as doctors commonly want to arrive at diagnosis as quickly as possible, and patients are likely to explain their personal circumstances as extensively as possible.

However, much of the work on gender within the framework of CDA was done on written discourse. According to Mills and Mullany (2011), CDA has been used most extensively to produce critical examinations of representations of gender through media discourse. Studies such as Koller (2004), Litosseliti (2006), Lazar (2006, 2009), and Iyer (2009) adopt CDA in analyzing texts from the mass media. These studies will be described in detail in the next chapter.

Recent research continues to explore the interplay between gender and language among young speakers. For example, Ladegaard and Bleses (2003) examined the attributes and the emergence period of gender differences in Danish children's language. Their study was based on the general hypothesis that female speakers prefer standard forms while male speakers prefer vernacular forms. With the help of picture elicitation test, the children were asked to pronounce strong and weak forms of past tense. The findings of the study confirmed the hypothesis and showed that girls indeed used more frequently standard past-tense pronunciation than boys and boys used more frequently vernacular past-tense pronunciation than girls. Ladegaard and Bleses concluded that gender differences in child language may emerge at earlier age (2003, p. 230).

A further study is that of Tulviste *et al*., (2010). They addressed cultural and gender differences in kindergarten children's peer talk in two interaction contexts and

in three cultures: Sweden, Finland, and Estonia. The study examined possible gender differences in children's talkativeness, the richness of their vocabulary, and communicative intents. It found that Swedish boys used imperatives for directives during free play more than Swedish girls. It also showed that children's talk is affected predominantly by the play setting and not the speaker's gender.

The previous section has presented a wide range of gender studies in spoken language. It has reviewed language and gender research from early studies starting with Lakoff's work to the most recent studies that tackled the construction of gender from a CDA perspective. It has also introduced key names in the field of language and gender such as Robin Lakoff, Dale Spender, Deborah Tannen, Deborah Cameron, Judith Butler and others. The following section deals with research of language and gender in written language. It presented research studies that examined gender differences in academic writing, students' essays, email messages, blogs, and online social media.

1.3.2. Gender Studies in Written Language

Despite the fact that investigation of gender differences in language has a long history, most studies have considered spoken language with only a small body of research looking at written language (Baron, 2010; Hunsinger *et al*., 2010). A handful of these studies have been conducted to explore gender differences among students of higher education in written examinations and academic writing. A key study is Mulac and Lundell (1994), which investigates impromptu descriptive essays written by college students after watching some landscape scenes. Essays were coded with regard to 'male language variables' (e.g., reference to quantity, judgmental adjectives,

elliptical sentences, locatives, and sentence-initial conjunctions or filler words) and 'female language variables' (e.g., reference to emotions, sentence-initial adverbials, intensive adverbs, uncertainty verbs, hedges, long mean length sentences). Applying these variables, Mulac and Lundell correctly identified the writer's gender 72.5% of the time.

Following the same line, Kanaris (1999) identified gender differences in the linguistic features of school pupils' writing. The study examined the writings of 29 girls and 25 boys aged between 8 to 10 years in a primary school in Australia. It found that girls write more complex texts containing more subordinate clauses and a wide range of adjectives and verbs. It also found that there was a tendency for boys to use 'I' and girls to use 'we' as indicative of boys' positioning themselves as the agents in their own narratives, while girls position themselves as participants and observers. Kanaris described male writers as 'event-oriented' and egocentric and described girls as more skilled both at word and text level.

In a similar recent study, Koppel, Argamon, and Shimoni (2002) were successful in discerning significant linguistic differences between male and female writers through the use of automatic text categorization techniques. They tested 1081 features: 405 function words, 500 common parts of speech trigrams, 100 common bigrams, and 76 single parts of speech category through the use of a algorithm. Some of the male discriminators were *determiners*, *cardinal numbers*, and *modifiers*, while female indicators included *negation*, *pronouns*, and *some prepositions*. They concluded that the algorithm is able to estimate the gender of the writer with 80% accuracy and judge whether it is a work of fiction or non-fiction with 98% accuracy.

A further exploration of gender difference in writing is presented in the work of

Jones and Myhill (2007). Their work searched for gender differences in terms of linguistic ability in writing and was based on the results of a two-year large-scale project of the linguistic characteristics of secondary-school writers at the sentence and text level. The sample of the study was made up of 718 pieces of writing collected from six schools. The results indicated that boys' paragraphing was more competent and longer than girls'. Boys' writing was more likely to be paragraphed appropriately, whereas girls' was more like to use partial or inconsistent paragraphing or very short paragraphs. The study also found differences in linking strategies between paragraphs. Boys made greater use of manner adverbials and linked through verbal repetition, synonyms, hyponyms, whereas girls used more proper nouns as a linking device. Jones and Myhill (2007) concluded that "the pattern of the boys' writing mirrored the pattern of better writers"(p.474), and confirmed that "it is boys, not girls, who might be viewed as making more mature choices concerning the crafting and creating of text"(p.470).

In a similar fashion, Gyllgård (2007) investigated linguistic gender differences in Swedish students' compositions in English. Students of both sexes were asked to write an essay on 'a portrait of grandmother/grandfather'. She found that girls used more dynamic and stative verbs than boys in their writings. She also reported that there was no significant difference in the use of adjectives. Likewise, Frej Lysén (2009) carried out a study to explore how gender is established in secondary students' texts. The students were asked to create two stories: one with a female main character and the other with a male main character. 32 texts were analyzed and the analysis was based on Halliday's functional grammar. The study found that the female authors were able to write texts from both a female and a male point of view from a first person perspective. In contrast, the male authors did not write the texts from a female point of view from a

first person perspective but when writing from a male perspective they did. The study also reported differences in the frequencies of stative and dynamic verbs.

Newman *et al*., (2008) is another key study that looked at gender differences in a corpus of more than 45 million words. They conducted a large-scale comprehensive study of more than 14,000 texts from 70 separate studies to examine gender differences in language use. The corpus contained text samples from seven different context categories: *emotion, time management, stream of consciousness, fiction, Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)–inkblot, exams,* and *conversation.* The text analysis was based on linguistic inquiry and word count. The study found that females' language was more likely than men's to include pronouns and social words, a wide variety of other psychological process references, and verbs. Negations and references to the home were also features of the female profile. Men exceeded women on a number of linguistic dimensions including word length, numbers, articles, and prepositions. Men also discussed various current concerns more frequently, and swore more often. Newman *et al*., concluded that their project "demonstrates small but systematic differences in the way that men and women use language, both in terms of what they say and how they choose to say it" (p.233).

Ely and Ryan (2008) also examined gender differences in reported speech. Their study analyzed a sample of writings of 180 participants (60 females, 48 males) that responded to six memory prompts. The findings reported that females produced more reported speech than did men. Females reported an average of 1.2 reports per 100 words compared with an average of .8 per 100 words of males.

Other available research suggested that there is more similarity than difference between genders in academic writing. A study conducted by Robson *et al*., (2002)

analyzed 87 essays written by final year history students from four different London universities. Sentences were classified according to their bold into tentative and evaluative features. Findings were analyzed according to gender and to grade. The study found that there was more similarity than differences in writing styles of men and women and that men tended to use more bold constructions.

Gender Differences in Electronic Discourse and Online Media

Gender differences have also been considered in electronic discourse and the language of the Internet. Many recent studies have investigated modern technology to assess gender differences in the contents of emails and blogs. Sandra Herring (1993) noted anecdotally that there was enough evidence of gender differences in email messages that it was possible to tell the gender of the writer solely from the rhetorical and linguistic strategies. She investigated gender differences in the use of language in asynchronous computer-mediated communication (CMC) such as bulletin boards, newsgroups, and discussion groups. The study revealed that females' language contained attenuated assertions, apologies, questions, a personal orientation and supportive statements. On the other hand, males' language contained strong assertions, self-promotions, rhetorical questions, an authoritative orientation towards action, and the use of humor and sarcasm. According to her, "the linguistic features that signal gender in computer-mediated interaction are much the same as those that have been described for face-to-face interaction" in previous research (Herring, 1993, p.6).

Also focusing on electronic discourse, Rosseti (1998) carried out a project of 100 email messages on different topics such as politics, teaching English, gardening, fire fighting, women's basketball…etc. The study showed that there was an undeniable gender difference in email messages: males are more prone to write in an aggressive,

competitive style, while women tend to be far more supportive in their writing.

Similarly, Thomson and Murachver (2001) asked 35 university students (19 females and 16 males) to send at least six email messages to 'netpals' who had been assigned to them for a period of two weeks. The 'netpal' was same-sex as the sender and when the researchers analyzed the emails, the found distinctive gender patterns. The researchers reported that female students included more personal information and were likely to refer to emotions as well as including apologies in their emails. They also used hedges and intensive adverbs. In contrast, men were likely to provide opinions and use insults. As for the number of words and length of messages, no real difference was found.

Another similar piece of research on gender difference in email communication is Colley *et al*., (2004). The study examined gender differences in the style and the contents of emails and letters sent to friends on the topic of summer vacations. The data were collected from 48 male and 48 female undergraduate students from the university of Leicester. The study found that female communication is more relational and expressive than that of males and focuses more upon personal and domestic topics such as family and shopping. Women are also more likely to begin their emails with personal enquires and end the correspondence with affectionate signatures than men. In addition, the study found that female students' emails were longer than those of males, used less offensive language, and contained more humor and exclamation marks.

Gender difference is also evident in weblogs. Argamon *et al*., (2007) reported many variables between bloggers on a large-scale study. The study analyzed over 140 million words of English texts written by men and women selected from a range of blogs. The study found that men bloggers are more likely to use articles and

prepositions, while female bloggers use more personal pronouns, conjunctions, and auxiliary verbs. It also reported that male bloggers used more words referring to topics such as politics and business, while female topics involved interpersonal conversation or relationship. Similarly, Huffaker and Calvert (2005) examined gender similarities and differences in language use and gender identity among teenage blogs. Using a content analysis approach, online idenitity and language use were investigated among male and female teenagers who created and maintained their blogs. The study revealed that male and female teenagers presented themselves similarly, and often revealed correct personal information. Huffaker and Calvert found that males more than females used emoticons and employed an active and resolute style of language.

Gender differences have been also investigated in online social media recently. Burger *et al*., (2011) investigated several different classifiers for determining the gender of Twitter users. They analyzed more than 4 million tweets from 184,000 authors in different languages (66.7% English), and obtained a predictive accuracy of 75.5% when using multiple tweets from each author, and 67.8% by using a single message per author. Results showed that emoticons and expressive words (such as *love, cute*, *aha, ooo, haha, ay*) were correlated with female authors, while words (such as *http, htt, Googl, goog*) were very correlated with male authors.

Schwartz *et al*., (2013) also examined linguistically 700 million words, phrases, and topics collected from the Facebook messages of 75, 000 volunteers. Using linguistic and correlational analyses, the study found that females used more emotion words (e.g., *excited*), and first-person singulars, and they mention more psychological and social processes (e.g., *love you* and *heart*). Males used more swear words and object references. The study also showed that males use the possessive ‘my’ when

mentioning their ‘wife’ or ‘girlfriend’ more often than females use ‘my’ with ‘husband’ or ’boyfriend. In addition, the researchers found that they could predict a user’s gender with 92% accuracy.

Gender differences have been recognized across other languages’ written discourse. Olson (2005) conducted a diachronic comparison of 300 French literary texts by male and female authors between the 16th and the 20th century. The study examined the ratios of words and other lexical contexts. It found that female texts contained more words favouring a personal style (pronouns, emotive, internal or subjective states and relationship terms), whereas male texts contained more abstract terms, determiners and nouns.

Concerned also with gender differences, Amir *et al*., (2012) carried out a study in Malaysian teen blogs. Using a qualitative approach, the study examined gender differences in linguistic features used by male and female teenagers in their blogs. The findings of the study show gender differences in the frequencies of five linguistic features: intensifiers, hedges, tag questions, empty adjectives, and adverbs.

Gender differences have also been investigated in relation to the terminology of colours. A number of studies have found that women have larger vocabularies regarding colours than men and that they have high ability in discriminating and matching colours (Pérez-Carpinell *et al*., 1998; Elias *et al*., 2003). Arthur *et al*., (2007) designed a study to look for gender differences in the written description of various colours through an analysis of wordiness, emotion, and colour term usage. The sample of the study consisted of 68 male and 82 female students over the age of 18 from a university in Texas. The study found that females did use more total words in their

colour descriptions and used more tertiary terms than males. In addition, females used words with a higher mean emotionality rating more frequently than did males.

Finally, there is a vast and expanding body of literature on this dynamic field and the research described here is only a drop in the ocean. According to Baxter (2011), scholars continue to be enchanted by the relationship between language and gender as it is enacted in a range of contexts such as social networks, business, leadership, education, SLA, law, government, health, entertainment, and the media, and in diverse location around the world.

Summary of the Chapter

Research on language and gender since 1970s has addressed a broad range of themes and issues through a variety of approaches and methodologies and the field is considered today as one of the most lively and interdisciplinary areas of linguistic Inquiry. “It seems likely that the research in this area will continue to flourish and that our interest in the relationship between gender and discourse will continue unabated” (Coates, 2013, p. 199).

The focus of this chapter has been upon the theorization of gender and its relation to language. This chapter has provided some historical background about the development of the main theories and trends of research in gender and language. It also presented some key theoretical concepts in the area such as gender, gender and sex, and gender stereotypes. Besides, it has attended to features distinguishing male and female languages. We have surveyed a number of the main theoretical approaches that scholars and linguists have drawn upon and developed for the analysis of the interaction between language and gender in both oral and written discourses.

In the next chapter, we will move on to explore gender and language in media discourse. A deeper look at different approaches to media discourse will be presented as well as the construction of gender in newspapers and magazines. It will also review research and studies that examined the interplay between gender and media discourse. In addition, it will look at columns as a genre in media discourse.

II. Chapter Two

Gender in Media Discourse

From newspapers to videogames, media shape our understanding of gender. By presenting us with images of women, men, and relationships, media suggest who we should be as women and men.

(Wood, 2007, p.256)

2.0. Introduction

Media have played an influential role in shaping views about gender and have extensively indulged in the processes of gender construction (Bathla, 2002). Media influence the way we perceive reality and contribute effectively in shaping our understanding of gender. According to Thompson and Armato (2012, p. 204), "media have the potential to communicate groundbreaking ideas about gender quickly and succinctly to a vast audience, and simultaneously have the potential to inundate that same audience with misleading, negative, and stereotypical messages". Such powerful potential is evident and reflected in media discourses.

O'Keeffe (2011) defines media discourses as "interactions that take place through a broadcast platform, whether spoken or written, in which the discourse is oriented to a non-present reader, listener or viewer" (p.441). Media discourse is "deeply embedded in the daily life and daily interaction of almost everyone" (Talbot, 2007, p.5). Because media discourses are rich sites for research, scholars and researchers at different levels of analysis have employed various methodological approaches. Specifically, newspaper language has always been a welcome source for various types of research. It provides "a wealth of language varieties within one physical unit in the form of article types that display an overall commonality of style" (O'Keeffe, 2002, p. 242).

This chapter provides a broad introduction to the ways in which gender engages with media discourse. It explores the relation between media discourse and gender representations through providing a comprehensive review of previous studies conducted on gender in the field of written media research. It also touches on a number of issues in media discourse such as gender inequality, media portrayals of men and women, underrepresentation of women, and gender polarized messages. In addition,

the chapter offers a review of a number of prevailing approaches that have been used for studying gender in written media discourse. A range of approaches from discourse analysis to semiotics is briefly discussed. Moreover, the chapter addresses newspaper columns, their language features, and their various types. It also presents some studies that have tackled newspaper articles and opinion columns in language and gender studies.

2.1. Gender in Media Discourse

The relationship between gender and media has received scholarly attention from the 1970s onwards and much of the research has been conducted in this field over the recent decades. Many of these studies have questioned gender representations, gender roles, gendered depiction, gender inequality and negative stereotypes in media.

Media have played a crucial role in constructing limited and stereotypical perceptions of gender. It has the full power of socializing individuals (Fourie, 2001). According to Carter & Steiner (2004), "media texts never simply mirror or reflect reality, but instead construct hegemonic definitions of what should be accepted as reality" (p. 2). Studies suggest that individuals' identities, opinions, insights and belief in what is normal is influenced by their consumption of the mainstream media (Wood, 2007). Kellner (1995) stated that media culture provides us with "models of what it means to be male or female" (p.1).

The next section provides a general overview of the intricate relationship between gender and media. First, it focuses on the ways in which men and women are presented in media and second; it explores how gender is depicted and produced in media texts.

2.1.1. The Presence of Men and Women in Media Discourse

Media, especially print media, have always been a strong source for gender inequality. For example, early newspapers in the USA, UK, and other industrialized countries were largely masculine enterprises. Men were the most desired readers, so newspapers were written to attract them (Carter and Steiner, 2004, p.16). According to Koven (2004), only a handful of women earned their living as journalists and only a few magazines and journals targeted women as readers in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Only a few women were hired specifically to write about things of interest to that somewhat marginalized audience, women (Mill, 1990). The upper levels of corporate media organizations and top newspaper management positions were almost entirely male (Croteau and Hoynes, 2000). It was assumed that "female journalists were best suited to write about fashion, domestic chores, and social news, and the women's page has always been regarded as 'low-rent ghetto' within journalism" (Carter and Steiner, 2004, p.17). Front pages of US newspapers have more stories and photos about men than women (Lont and Bridge, 2004). Despite the fact that women outnumber men in real life, "media (mis)representations tempt us to believe the opposite" (Wood, 2007, p.257). Studies of British news organizations recurrently show that "the vast majority of senior journalists and editorial decision makers are men, with most estimates placing the number at higher than 80 percent" (Allan, 2010, p.152). Van Zoonen (1998, p. 34), identified the following recurrent inequalities in journalism:

- Daily journalism, whether it is print or broadcasting, is dominated by men.
- The higher up the hierarchy or the more prestigious a particular medium or section is, the less likely it is to find women.

- Women tend to work in areas of journalism that can be considered an extension of their domestic responsibilities and their socially assigned qualities of care, nurturing and humanity.
- Regardless of difference in years of experience, education level and other socioeconomic factors, women are paid less for the same work.

Goddard and Patterson (2000, p.121) stated that the language of advertising and newspapers both have a strong focus on gender in the language of mass media texts. For example, some gendered expressions can be found in newspaper headlines, "*Three people including a woman were involved in the accident*", "*Two aid workers and a woman have been kidnapped*" and in sport, the football World Cup is the men's competition; it is only gendered when it is the women's game (Woodward, 2011, p.2).

Wood (2007, p. 257) identified three themes related to gender that are always reflected in media. First, women and minorities are underrepresented. Second, men and women are portrayed primarily in stereotypical ways that reflect and reproduce conventional views of gender. Third, relationships between men and women are usually portrayed as consistent with traditional gender roles and power relations.

The underrepresentation and the marginalization of women in the media has long been a frequent issue of gender. According to Rhode (1997), women continue to be grossly underrepresented in media positions of greatest status and power and dramatically overrepresented in the lowest. Women account for less than 10 percent of editors in chief, news publishers, and deans or directors of journalism programs (Otto, 1993; Mills, 1993). A recent study of Sunday-morning news programs reported that only 10% of guests are women, and female guests are given less time to talk than males (Jenkins, 2003; Udell, 2005). Another survey of newspapers and network news programs found that men wrote about two-thirds of the front-page stories and provided 85 percent of the television reporting (Bridge, 1993).

Dennis (1993) reported that, while women constituted less than 40 percent of US newspaper editorial staffs, a content analysis of ten elite US newspapers found that women wrote slightly less than 30 percent of bylined[1] front-page stories. On these front pages, men wrote disproportionately more economics, government and politics, science and technology, war and military, leisure and activity stories. On the other hand, women wrote disproportionately more accident and disaster, health and medicine, and especially education stories.

In 1995, an extensive cross-national study was conducted to cover women's portrayal in media in seventy-one countries. According to Wood (2007), this Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) "gave the first truly international picture of women's underrepresentation in news" (p. 115). The project found that only 17% of the world's news subjects were women. A follow-up study in 2000 found that the percentage of female news actors had only increased by 1% to 18%. In 2006, GMMP reported that men constituted 86% of spokespeople and 83% of experts, while women were more than twice as likely as men to be portrayed as victims. The 2000 and 2006 GMMP editions, resulted in awareness-raising campaigns targeting the role of media in reproducing gender stereotypes (Milan, 2013). In 2010, GMMP covered nearly 16,750 news stories on television, the radio, and in newspapers which were monitored by 20,767 news personnel in 108 countries. The project found only 24% of the people heard or read about in print, radio and television news are females. In contrast, 76% - more than 3 out of 4 – of the people in the news are males. It also reported that 46% of stories reinforce gender stereotypes, almost eight times higher than stories that

[1] A **byline** is a short phrase or paragraph that indicates the name of the author of an article in books, magazines, newspapers, newsletters, content Web sites, blogs, or other publications. It is often the name of the author of each article within a newsletter. Usually newsletters are written by a single person with only a few pieces provided by others. If the newsletter editor is the primary author, often no bylines are given for those articles. Bylines can be placed at the beginning of an article or at the end. If a byline is placed at the end, often a short biographical description is included as well as contact information (Lake & Bean, 2008, p.330).

challenge such stereotypes 6%. Moreover, it reported that news continues to portray a world in which men outnumber women in almost all occupational categories, the highest disparity being in the professions.

Evidence of female underrepresentation is also found in media coverage of female athletes and female candidates. According to Kane and Greendorfer (1994), underrepresentation and marginalization of female athletes in the media serve to create an illusion that females are nonexistent in the sporting world, which ultimately supports the notions of hegemonic masculinity. In spite of the fact that an increasing number of women participate in sports throughout the world, sports remain a male dominated field (Schell and Rodriguez, 2000). Similarly, there is a continued underrepresentation of women in politics (Krook and Childs, 2010). Studies provided evidence about gender biases regarding political women and press coverage of women candidates (see Khan 1994, 1996; Norris 1997; and Devitt 2002).

The previous section has discussed how media have been a strong source for gender inequalities, underrepresentation of women and gender biases. The following section deals with how media influence our views of men and women. It focuses on gendered depiction and how gender is constituted and produced by the media.

2.1.2. The Depiction of Men and Women in Media Discourse

The social construction of gender as a binary code of man/women or masculinity/femininity and of doing gender as actively constructing affiliation as an individual are features that are constantly present in the media (Volkmer, 2012, p. 418). According to Litosseliti (2006), women are often portrayed in the media through their physical attributes as sex objects, as mothers and wives, in passive or supportive

roles, and as victims. The feminine ideal is young and thin, preoccupied with men and children, and enmeshed in relationships or housework (Crane, 1999; Holtzman, 2000). Media have created two opposite stereotypical portrayals of women: good and bad. Good women are pretty, deferential, childlike, faithful, physically desirable, and focused on home and family (Wood, 2007). Bad women are ugly, evil, strong, inscrutable, and dangerous (Andersen and Gray, 2008). While women in the 1940s and the 1950s were predominately portrayed as housewives, mothers, and victims, from the late 1960s they also began to be shown as independent, assertive, and career minded (Lind and Brzuzy, 2008). In the 21st century, images of women in the media have largely been linked with a consumerist lifestyle and a rather domesticated version of femininity (Andersen and Gray, 2008). In today's world, modern women are portrayed as successful, perfect wives and mothers, and triumphant professionals in a life that is full of leisure activities (Newman, 2008). These media images of women have been regarded as "contributing to women's second-class status in society, limiting their contribution to wider democratic discussions and their individual life chances" (Carter, 2012, p. 370).

On the other hand, men are overwhelmingly depicted as strong, active, and independent. They have extreme stereotypes of masculinity: serious, hard, confident, tough, aggressive, unafraid, violent, totally in control of all emotions, and in no way feminine (Wood, 2007). Katz *et al*., (1999) claimed that media teach boys and men that to be a 'real man' means to be powerful and in control. Men were depicted as stoic, virile and strong, accepting risks and gaining mastery in print media in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s (Fejes, 1992). According to Iyer and Luke (2011), in the 1980s the concept of 'new masculinity' depicted men in print media as the sensitive male who stressed the importance of a close bond, as the father who spent his time with family in

nurturing. More recently, men are depicted as popular, well-dressed white men aspiring to current lifestyles and commodities (Ibid, p.438).

In a similar fashion, the relationships between men and women are depicted in stereotypical ways. Wood (2007, p. 263) presented four ways in which media reflect and promote traditional images of relations between the sexes. According to her, media continue to: (1) portray women primarily as domestic and dependent on powerful, independent men; (2) represent men as the competent authorities who save or take care of less competent women; (3); picture women as primary caregivers and men as breadwinners; and (4) depict women as victims and sex objects and men as aggressors.

Portrayals of men and women in stereotypical ways continue to pervade the media and "limit our perceptions of human possibilities" (Wood, 1994, p.32). These portrayals contribute to gender inequality in the media, as men tend to control the creation and production of media images worldwide (Newman, 2008). Therefore, more efforts are needed to raise people's awareness, eliminate gender stereotypes, and encourage balanced portrayals of men and women. Media should promote positive images of men and women and represent their roles in equal positions for the good of future generations.

This section has provided a general overview of how media represent and construct gender. Media have been considered as one of the most pervasive and profoundly influential socializing forces, which have attracted scholars and researchers to investigate various media discourses using a variety of approaches. Thus, the following section focuses on these current leading approaches to the study of media discourse.

2.2. Approaches to Media Discourse

Linguists and others working in language and communication have always been interested in the language of media (McKay, 2006). The language of the media has been approached from two main perspectives: as linguistic institutions, looking at how language is used in different media, and as social institutions, as representations of political, social, and cultural realities (Corona, 2014, p. 409). Scholars and linguists have approached the language of media using different analytical frameworks. Boyd-Barrett (1994), surveyed three main frameworks to the study of media, that of Van Dijk's (1995, 1988) structure of news, Fowler's (1991) ideology in news language, and Bell's (1991) production of news process. Bell (1995), emphasized the approaches of critical linguistics, and critical discourse analysis in studying media. More recently, Kress and Van Leeuwen's (1996, 2001), outlined a multimodal discourse analysis to approach media discourse. Cotter (2010), called for an interactional and ethnographic approach to media language that focuses on the text and the process of text production as well. O'Keeffe (2011), stressed the importance of the potential of corpus linguistics and suggested using it as a complementary approach to other existing methodologies such as conversational analysis and critical discourse analysis. In the following sections, we will map out the most used approaches applied in the study of media language.

A. Discourse Analysis (Critical Discourse Analysis CDA)

Discourse analysis offers good potential as an analytical framework for the analysis of media discourse. According to Gill (2007), discourse analysis refers to "a huge variety of approaches including critical linguistics, social semiotics, ethnomethodology and conversation analysis, speech act theory and a number of post-structuralist

approaches to texts and history" (p.58). Discourse analysis has been developed fairly recently in sociology and social psychology by scholars such as Potter and Wetherell (1987) and Speer (2005). Gill (2007), specified discourse analysis as having four main themes: a concern with discourse itself, a view of language as constructive and constructed, an emphasis on discourse as a form of action, and a conviction in the rhetorical organization of discourse. Discourse analysis is concerned with the examination of meaning, and the often complex processes through which social meanings are produced; and it aims to offer a true or objective account of a given text (Tonkiss, 2004, p. 380). It uses the general method of linguistics to discover the basic units of discourse and the rules that relate them (Harley, 2001). Deacon *et al*., (1999) argued that discourse analysis has two main concerns: first, it is interested in examining use of the language in social life, and, second, it is interested in investigating the relationships between language use and social structure.

In the late 1970s, critical discourse analysis (CDA) emerged as a special practice of discourse analysis. According to Bell and Garrett (1998), critical discourse analysis has produced the majority of the research into media discourse during the 1980s and 1990s, and has become the standard framework for studying media texts within European linguistics and discourse studies. It has been most profusely applied in the analysis of media texts, emphasizing issues in ideology and power in news and editorials (Corona, 2014). It draws on different disciplines such as classical rhetoric, ethnography, ideology, sociolinguistics, functional linguistics, and pragmatics (Bazzi, 2009). It is 'critical' in the sense that it criticizes the dominant social order through language analysis, whereby the analytical tools of language are devoted to examining a wider social and ideological context (Billig, 2007).

CDA has been associated with the works of Fairclough (1995, 2000), Ruth Wodak (1989, 1997, 1999), and Van Dijk (1984, 1992a, 1998). Van Dijk (2008), defined CDA as "a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context" (p.85). According to McKay (2006), "critical discourse analysts are interested in both details of the text itself and the broader social, political, and cultural functions of media discourse to determine other layers of meaning" (p.573).

CDA has been recognized as a comprehensive analytical approach among scholars and discourse analysts, but it has been the target of several criticisms. One criticism is that CDA is very similar to earlier stylistic analysis that took place in literary criticism (Hyland, 2013). CDA has also been criticized for its excessive reliance on social theory that explains discursive practices and for paying little attention to the meanings as constructed by participants (Macbeth, 2003); (Slembrouck, 2001); and (Schegloff, 1997,1999). In addition, some critics argue that CDA does not always consider the role of the reader in the consumption and interpretation of the text, and does not provide sufficiently detailed and systematic analyses of the text (Van Noppen, 2004; Schegloff, 1997).

B. Content Analysis

Content analysis is by far the most significant quantitative method of textual analysis of media (Gillespie and Toynbee, 2006). It has been used to study media texts, newspaper stories, television coverage of specific issues, film contents and more besides (Stokes, 2003). According to Titscher *et al*., (2000), content analysis is "the longest established method of text analysis among the set of empirical methods of social investigation" (p.55). It has been described as systematic, objective, and

quantifiable (Jensen, 2013). The earliest applications of content analysis were in the fields of journalism and political science in the studies of mass media and propaganda, and in anthropological field studies to categorize observational and interview data (Waltz et al., 2010). More recently, content analysis has been applied widely in cross-cultural research, communication research, psychotherapy transcripts, reported dreams and daydreams, and historical tends (Smith, 2000).

Gill (2007), defined 'content analysis' as "a quantitative technique which measures certain aspect of a media text, it involves counting the frequency of particular kinds of portrayals, using a coding framework that has been created and agreed in advance. The raw data it produces comes in the form of frequencies, which can then be translated into percentages, or analyzed for significance using a variety of different statistical packages" (p.43). This research approach has been widely used by researchers to study how a range of issues represented in the media (Anderson, 1997). Among these studies are Burgess and Gold (1985), Gans (1980), Halloran et al. (1970), Glasgow University Media Group (1976, 1980, 1982), Tumber (1982), and Schlesinger *et al*. (1991).

Content analysis has been used extensively as the primary method for large-scale and comparative studies of textual data. According to Seale (2004), content analysis "potentially has a high degree of validity and reliability in terms of precise sampling, providing clear empirical evidence for research findings and in allowing for replication and generalization" (p.368). It is a persuasive and straightforward method that generates reliable, replicable facts, and only requires a basic level of mathematical skills (Stokes, 2003). In addition, it is a systematic and standardized method as it is designed to "maximize objectivity by incorporating explicit rules and systematic procedures" (Waltz *et al*., 2010, p.280).

Despite the previous advantages, content analysis has been subject to a number of criticisms. Chief amongst these is the objection that content analysis is concerned simply with "crass" content: with *what* is said rather than with *how* it is said, with the description of texts rather than their interpretations, meaning, or effects (Seale, 2004, p. 368). Another drawback is that content analysis is frequently time consuming and expensive, as the task of examining and categorizing large volumes of content is often laborious and tedious (Wimmer and Dominick, 1994, p. 163). However, a qualitative content analysis has been used to overcome the shortcomings of quantitative content analysis such as providing answers to how the categories were derived by applying a systematic, theory-guided approach to text analysis (Mayring, 2002). According to Devereux (2003), the quantitative approach came in for "a great deal of criticism in the last quarter of the twentieth century and was eventually supplemented by a form of qualitative content analysis that emphasized the notion of discourse" (p. 194).

Neuendorf (2002) suggested that qualitative content analysis might be the fastest-growing research technique. Kuckartz (2002), defined qualitative content analysis as "a form of analysis in which an understanding and interpretation of the text play a far larger role than in classical content analysis, which is more limited to the so called manifest content" (p.33). It looks for more general themes and "focuses on the symbolic, discursive, framing or narrative dimensions of the texts" (Devereux, 2003, p.194). However, in many ways quantitative and qualitative content analyses are complementary and can be used in studying any sort of media (Randolph, 2008). Combining both methods will strengthen the final outcome of any research.

C. Semiotic Analysis

Semiotics (literally "the study of signs") became one of the most influential interdisciplinary approaches to the study of culture, media, and communication from the 1960s onward (Jensen, 2013). "In its competition with other approaches to the media, semiotics presents itself by no means as a unified theory…the semiotic approach belongs to the most basic ones" (Nöth, 1997, p.2). As an analytical approach, it is usually applied to images and visual texts (Stokes, 2003). This approach allows researchers to look at the underlying structures that determine how media texts are constructed (Wall *et al*., 2008).

The study of signs, sign systems originated in the works of the Swiss linguist de Saussure (1974) and the French critic Roland Barthes (1973), "who was principally responsible for applying a semiotic approach to the analysis of media texts" (Masterman, 1997, p.28). Semiotics is based on the idea that similar understandings can be developed for systems of communication other than language (Burn and Parker, 2003). It provides a systematic method for understanding how signs work to produce meanings (Gaines, 2011). It is about how the producer of an image makes it mean something, and how we, as readers, get meaning out of it (Stokes, 2003).

One of the key advantages of semiotic analysis is that it demands relatively few sources and it is possible to conduct a semiotic analysis of only one text or image (Stokes, 2003). Bignell (2002), argued that semiotic analysis is "highly effective in revealing how meanings are communicated by signs, read in relation to social codes, and related to wider ideological positions in society" (p.103). Despite these advantages, semiotic analysis has its limits. Semiotics is a highly subjective method that depends entirely on "the analytical brilliance of the semiotician" (Couldry, 2000, p.75). In addition, semiotic analysis is only able to analyze one particular text in

isolation (Laughey, 2007). However, semiotic analysis can be practically fruitful if it is combined with other analytical approaches.

D. Conversational Analysis (CA)

Conversational analysis is another theoretical framework that has proven its value in media studies. According to O'Keeffe (2011), conversational analysis has been the prevailing methodology in the study of spoken media discourse. CA originated in the work of the American sociologist Harvey Sacks in the 1960s. From the mid 1980s, conversational analysts have focused on interactional forms of talk such as those found in interviews, talk shows, debates, phone-ins and the like (Greatbatch, 1998). Several studies have been conducted using CA framework to examine media talk such as Clayman (1993); Clayman and Whalen (1989); Greatbatch (1992), Heritage *et al*., (1988); and Hutchby (1991).

Conversational analysis is interested in the structures and the conventions of social interaction such as turn taking; repair; the sequences of ordering of actions; context; and the other fine details of ordinary communication and interaction (Blackshaw and Crawford, 2009). It involves detailed, qualitative analysis of audio and video recordings of naturally occurring social interaction (Greatbatch, 1998). CA is different from other analytical approaches in that, it "concentrates on recorded talk in natural settings of social interaction, rather than invented sentences" (Hutchby, 2006, p.21). CA is more about conversational dynamics than about linguistic structuring and structures (Hacker, 1996). It shows the meaningfulness of small silences and momentary hesitations (Scannell, 1998).

CA has provided many important insights into the principles of social organization

that infuse the practices and the behaviors out of which human social interaction is made (Prevignano and Thibault, 2003). But despite its success as a methodological approach of spoken discourse, CA has been subject to a number of criticisms. One criticism is that CA pays insufficient attention to the relationship between form and function (Schiffrin, 1994). In addition, the CA transcription system does not account for intonation and paralanguage and is therefore useless for those working with suprasegmental aspects of language (Lazaraton, 2002). There is also a claim that CA lacks adequate sense of the contextualization of utterances within a wider set of social relations, and conversational analysts in general are unwilling to find connections between "the micro details of talk in interaction and the macro levels of the sociological variables as class and gender"(Hutchby, 2006, p.31). However, CA remains a practical and effective approach in different disciplines, as Heritage (1995) commented "in this dynamic interplay between findings, theory, and methodology lies the real strength of CA as a growing and diversifying empirical initiative in the study of oral communication" (p.410).

E. Other Approaches

Beside the above-mentioned approaches, there have been many other approaches that have been applied to the analysis of media discourse. Among these are: *narrative analysis, ideological analysis, pragmatic analysis,* and *political discourse analysis*. Narrative analysis is a qualitative method that helps to raise awareness of the way stories structure the meanings and experiences of life since stories are fundamental to many media texts (Gillespie and Toynbee, 2006). Ideological analysis concentrates on the connections between cultural representations and power relations, affirming the importance of images, values, and discourses in constructing and reproducing the social order (Gill, 2007). Pragmatic analysis involves the use of pragmatic concepts

and insights to discuss style, register, and issues of audience responses to texts (Schiffrin *et al*., 2008). Political discourse analysis focuses on issues in political discourse, which is "continuously changing within wider processes of social and cultural change affecting the media themselves, and other social domains which are linked to them" (Fairclough, 1998, p.142).

The current study adopts a content analysis approach in analyzing the metadiscoursal and the linguistic features in the opinion texts of British and Saudi columnists and explores the influence of gender using tools from corpus-linguistics. The previous section has addressed a variety of theoretical approaches that have been used to explore the discourse of media. Media "provide inhabitable discourses that form the substances of culture and experience" (Spitulnik, 2000, p. 149). Therefore, exploring media has yielded a very rich literature of empirical studies and research that have examined the uniqueness of this discourse and this is the focus of the following sections.

2.3. Written Media Discourse: A Review of Literature

Written media discourse provides analysts with a rich source of texts and "the analysis of media language is a worthy enterprise" (Litosseliti, 2006, p.92). The positive reasons behind the usefulness of analyzing the language of media texts are explained in Fairclough's *Media Discourse* (1995):

- The media have signifying power, that is, the power to represent things in particular ways.
- The media are not simply representational, but can be seen as sites for the discursive construction, and contestation, of knowledge, beliefs, values, social relations, and social identities.

- Media discourse works ideologically: the meanings produced serve a system of power relations, all representation involves decisions about what to include and what to exclude, what to foreground and what to background.
- Media discourse assumes/creates subject positions for an ideal reader, viewer, or listener; actual readers, viewers, or listeners have to negotiate a relationship with the positions offered (as cited in Litosseliti, 2006, p.92).

Bell (1995) stressed the following: the importance of media for evidence of language use and language attitudes in a speech community; the fact that the use of media themselves makes language; and the way the media reflect culture, politics, and social life. Stokes (2003) provided further reasons for studying media texts. According to him, media texts are readily accessible and available in multiple forms and they are topical and social, so that they can improve our understanding of cultural life.

Within media discourse, as stated by Wodak and Busch (2004), "the news genre has been the most prominent research focus so far in linguistic approaches to texts, especially in discourse analysis. The press has received comparatively more attention than television, and outside of conversation analysis, radio has been relatively neglected, except for some studies of news programs" (p.107-108). However, a great deal of research on media language has been made on newspaper language and the following section will present some key research that has investigated the discourse of newspapers.

2.3.1. Newspapers Studies

The language of newspapers has been classified as one of the four major registers in the English language, besides *conversation*, *academic writing*, and *fiction* (Biber *et al*., 1999). According to Jucker (1992), newspaper language is "a variety to the extent

that it has linguistic features that distinguish it from other varieties. It is obviously part of the larger variety of media language as a whole and, on a different level it is part of the variety of written language" (p. 25). A number of sociolinguistic studies have investigated the features of the language of newspapers. Bell (1984, 1991), studied the influence of the linguistic choices of the authors on the audience. He proposed 'audience design' style and pointed out that the audience is the most important factor in the choice of language style. Kress (1983) explained the possibility of manipulating readers by choosing the appropriate linguistic variant. Fowler (1991) showed the effectiveness of linguistic analysis in arriving at a better understanding of the ideological and the cultural constructions of news stories. Using the perspective of critical linguistics, Fowler argued that the language of the news is a practice that is constructed by the social and the political world.

Other studies have examined newspapers language from a stylistic perspective. For example, O'Donnell and Todd (1980) made a stylistic comparison between *The Guardian* and the *Daily Mirror*. They examined some prominent linguistic features. They reported that the headlines in *The Guardian* tended to avoid finite verbs, whereas the *Daily Mirror* avoided verbs altogether in its headlines. Carter (1988), focused on the features of the vocabulary in British newspaper language. He provided a detailed stylistic analysis of the front-page article of the *Daily Mail* on the Labour leader, Neil Kinnock. Using certain terminology such as core vocabulary and non-core words, he illustrated the shortcomings and the deviations of this article.

Some studies have concentrated on examining certain features in newspaper language. Jucker (1992) examined the structure and the use of noun phrases in British newspapers and showed how the use of appositional phrases can mark the style of the author. Axelsson (1998) studied the use of contractions in late twentieth-century

British newspapers. She found a dramatic increase in the frequencies of contractions. Westin (2002) examined language change in newspaper editorials during the twentieth-century and found a "most conspicuous" growing acceptance of informal language, the use of shorter sentences, fewer subordinate clauses, and fewer passives (Westin, 2002, p.165). Murphy (2005) studied lexico-grammatical markers of attribution or reporting in English and Italian opinion articles.

Different registers in newspaper language have been the subjects of many studies. Toolan (1988) focused on the language of press advertising. Ghadessy (1988) examined the discourse of sport reporting and identified the special terminology used with sport commentaries. Van Dijk (1992) and Bolívar (1994) examined the structures and the strategies of editorials. Reah (2002) discussed newspaper headlines and identified their unique features.

Media discourse was and will continue to be one of the most fertile grounds for investigation and research. The relationship between gender and media has received scholarly attention from the 1970s onwards (Krijnen *et al*., 2011). Until the 1980s, it was generally assumed that media studies and gender research would have "as its central focus the interrogation of images of women in the media" (Carter, 2012, p.370). However, by the end of the twentieth century, gender scholars became interested in analyzing the ways in which men and male roles were portrayed in the media (Fejes, 1992; Beynon, 2002; and Farrell, 2003). Wider research of media have been carried out on various gender issues, as the following sections will show.

2.3.2. Media Studies of Gender Representations and Gender Stereotypes

The issue of gender has been a hot topic in media discourse that has attracted the attention of many researchers and scholars. According to Iyer and Luke (2011), the study of gender in media texts "examines the different characteristics and symbolism used to portray male/female subjects in magazines, newspapers, films, advertisements, television, and digital technologies" (p. 437).

Fasold *et al*., (1990) concentrated on investigating the effect of editorial policy on gender usage. They examined the effect of general statements against sexist usage in the style manual for *The Washington Post*. More specifically, they investigated the difference in the use of a middle initial in references to men and to women. They based their investigation on the hypothesis that "men are typically identified, on first reference, by a full name including a middle initial more frequently than women are, and also the use of an initial makes an impression of importance or authority" (Fasold *et al*., 1990, p. 526). Through applying quantitative methods, the investigators searched for four references: a prominent female, a prominent male, an ordinary female, and an ordinary male. The study found that reporters discriminate between men and women by the use of initials. It also showed that men would be identified by a name including a middle initial more than women with the corresponding prominence designation.

Caldas-Coulthard (1993) examined the ways female and male speech are represented in newspapers. An investigation of 'hard news' narratives in three leading quality British newspapers was carried out. The study showed that women are denied the role of speakers in the news and are relegated to less powerful roles. According to the author, such representation does more than reflect the asymmetrical relationships in society, it also reinforces and naturalizes them. She also indicated that the speech of

men and women tend to be represented by means of different descriptive verbs. Verbs like ‘scream’, ‘yell’, ‘nag’, ‘gossip’ or ‘chatter’, used to report women's speech, are associated with negative female stereotypes like ‘housewife’ or ‘mother-in-law’.

Media studies on gender stereotypes have been conducted since the 1960s, when second wave feminism deconstructed gender formations in media texts (Iyer and Luke, 2011). Goffman (1979) is a groundbreaking study of the representation of gender in print commercial advertisements in newspapers and magazines. He focused his analysis on how gender messages were constructed and sent through images and texts. His findings showed subtle biases in media representation of gender, where men usually were represented as superior, competent, and having authority, and women were represented in submissive roles. He argued that media reinforces traditional gender roles in advertisements by the size, position, and the authority of the male versus female actor. For example, Goffman found that in several print advertisements that featured a man and a woman, the man was almost always taller in height or towered over the woman. He also found that when an advertisement requires someone to sit or lie on a bed or a floor, that someone is almost always a woman or a child, hardly ever a man. In addition, concomitantly, women, much more than men, are pictured as the kind of psychological loss or remove from a social situation that leaves one unoriented for action.

Lysonski (1985), explored the depiction of men and women in British magazine advertisements. He found some change in portrayals from 1976 to 1982–1983, although these shifts were not dramatic. For example, he reported that women were being portrayed less often as dependent upon men, while men were being portrayed less often as dominant over women and as authority figures. Lysonski concluded that

stereotypical images of men and women still persist in British magazines. Relevant literature such as Courtney and Lockeretz (1971); Belkaoui and Belkaoui (1976); and Mitchell and Taylor (1990), have also demonstrated that both men and women portrayals in print advertising reflect gender stereotypes. Similarly, numerous studies have investigated gender stereotypes in television advertisements such as Dominick and Rauch, (1972); McArthur and Resko, (1975); Manstead and McCulloch, (1981); Downs and Harrison, (1985); Livingstone and Green, (1986); Furnham and Bitar, (1993); and Furnham and Skae, (1997). The findings of these studies provide clear evidence of gender stereotyping in TV advertisements. In addition, gender stereotyping was investigated in radio advertisements where men and women were portrayed differently in terms of their role, creditability, and location (Furnham and Schofield, 1986; Hurtz and Durkin, 1997).

Furnham and Mak (1999) provided a large-scale comprehensive study of gender stereotyping on TV advertisements across cultures. They compared and contrasted fourteen previous studies from 11 different countries on five continents over 25 years (1975-1999). The authors found evidence for "the universality of sex-role stereotyping in Television commercials" (p. 413). For example, men were more likely than women to be the central authority figures, to function as interviewers or professionals, to be portrayed as engaged in outdoor and leisure activities, and to be middle-aged. Women were more likely to fill dependent roles, to be young, and to be portrayed in the home. They also reported that studies done in more traditional societies in less developed countries showed stronger gender-role stereotyping, than developed countries. Other cross-culture studies have reported stereotyped images of men and women in advertising as Wiles and Tjernlund, (1991); Biswas and Valerie, (1992); Griffin *et al*., (1994); Sengupta, (1995); Maynard and Taylor (1999); and Frith *et al*., (2004).

Visual portrayals of men and women in media have also been the concern of numerous surveys and studies. Miller (1975), analyzed female and male roles depicted in news photos appearing in two leading newspapers: *The Washington Post* and *The Los Angeles Times.* The sample analyzed yielded 2,168 pictures in *The Washington Post* and 1,493 pictures in the *Los Angeles Times*. The study showed that the number of photographs of men was double or sometimes triple the number of women. Similarly, Luebke (1989) examined the roles portrayed by men and women in newspaper photographs. The study analyzed photographs in 184 issues of four Connecticut newspapers that yielded 8960 representations of men and women. The study showed that photos of men outnumber photos of women everywhere in the newspapers except the lifestyle section. The study also found that men are typically portrayed in professional roles in the photos, whereas women are cast in domestic roles. The previous findings replicate in Blackwood's work (1983) which also reported that men are more likely to be seen than women in newspapers regarding their pictorial portrayals. More studies have confirmed the lower prominence of women in newspapers (Foreit *et al*., 1980; and Archer *et al*., 1983).

More recent studies continue to produce findings of such gender representations and male dominance in media discourse. Isanović (2006), explored gender representations in daily newspapers of Bosnia, Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia. The study found that women are hardly visible in stories that make the news. Women were more visible in topics of a cultural and artistic nature, where they were depicted in a decorative fashion. The study also showed that main sources of information were men (44.5%), while women constituted only (8.1%).

In similar fashion, Matud *et al*. (2011) examined the portrayal of women and men in Spanish newspapers. Using a content analysis approach, the study analyzed 4,060 articles and advertisements selected from 24 issues of Spanish newspapers. The study confirmed a very unequal representation of men and women. Men were found to be more commonly featured in the articles, photographs, and advertisements than women. They appeared in 55.1% in the texts analyzed, whereas women only appeared 6.8%. Men were portrayed as soldiers, athletes, and high-rank businessmen much more than women. In addition, the study reported gender differences in sources of reporting and advertising.

A few number of studies have considered gender representations in terms of metaphor. Stirling (1987) conducted a study on gender representation in Australian newspapers. The study discussed the devices that enhance a particular representation of gender, especially women, such as the use of metaphorical expressions, the use of metonymy, and the use of passivization. In terms of metaphors, Stirling found that women are often referred to as animals such as birds, and horses as the following examples illustrate:

- *Australian girls make great pets.* *(Courier Mail)*
- *A tall leggy blonde with a mane of thick golden hair.* *(Courier Mail)*

Koller (2004) is another key work on gender representations through metaphor in business media. She integrated critical discourse analysis with corpus-based discourse analysis in her investigation of gender in business media discourse taken from magazines and newspapers in the US and the UK. The sample comprises two areas of business media: marketing and mergers, and acquisitions, where the readership has 90% male. Koller studied female managers' responses to metaphors of war and sport. The analysis

showed that war/fighting metaphors are the most frequent and the most embedded with business media and that sports metaphors are linked to aggressive competition and war. Koller argued that these metaphoric expressions of war and sport create gender bias. She concluded by emphasizing the urgent need to create neutral metaphors that are less aggressive as "media plays a pivotal role in shaping the expectations about people's behaviors" and it is the responsibility of journalists who "should rise to the challenge of at least proposing non-violent metaphors" (p.178).

Iyer (2009) is another fruitful investigation of femininity in written media discourse. Using critical discourse analysis, Iyer examined 46 'human interest' feature articles from Indian print newspapers and magazines over a period of change in the Indian economy. Her work aimed at analyzing macro discourses of these articles of female entrepreneurs. Following the frameworks of Foucault (1991), Fairclough (1992), and Van Dijk (2001), she identified macro-dominant discourses of femininity, patriarchy, and a resistant discourse, which she termed as a discourse of 'being' and 'becoming'. Her analysis also included a micro-level investigation of grammatical features such as modality, lexical semantics, and speech acts. Iyer concluded that media discourses reflect the changes that have occurred to the status of Indian women. She urged that the discourse of 'being' and 'becoming' demand a particular type of subjectivity from entrepreneurs and this "includes the ability to align with their given identities of mother, daughter and housewife while valuing their new subject positions" (Iyer, 2009, p. 256).

In addition to the previous mentioned review of media studies on gender portrayals and gender stereotypes, gender has been the concern of several media research studies

in relation to sourcing and reporting. The following section presents studies that have investigated the inequality of gender in the media world.

2.3.3. Media Studies of Gender on News Sourcing and Reporting

Research investigating the interplay between gender and journalism has grown rapidly in recent years. Van Zoonen (1998: 36) defines four major areas in what she calls 'the gendered nature of journalism'. These include the selection of topics (men report hard news while women focus on soft news); story angles (men focus on facts and sensation, while women are concerned with backgrounds and effects, as well as compassion); the use of sources (men predominantly report about other men, women focus on women); as well as ethics (the masculine nature of journalism is detached, while the feminine nature is concerned with audience needs).

Some media research has investigated the use of men and women as the sources for news reports such as Leibler and Smith (1997); Zoch and VanSlyke Turk (1998); and Ross (2007). Using a content analysis approach, Leibler and Smith (1997) explored gendered sources in 159 stories broadcast on ABC, CBS, CNN, and NBC. The study concluded that male sources were used more often than female sources and were more likely to be shown in a professional capacity. It showed that male reporters had five and a half male sources for every one female source and they reported on 86% of the foreign policy stories.

Similarly, Zoch and VanSlyke Turk (1998) also examined the gender variable in sourcing. Based on a content analysis over ten years (1986-1996) of three US newspapers, they focused on the inclusion of female sources in newspaper stories and analyzed whether the gender of the reporter affects that inclusion. They found that out

of 1,126 stories analyzed, only 20 percent of named sources were women. They also reported differences regarding the length of the stories. “It appears that men were quoted more frequently in the longer, more important stories, and were more trusted than women to give the longer, more in depth quote” (Zoch and VanSlyke Turk, 1998, p. 769-70).

More recently, Ross (2007) addressed the same question of gender sources in British newspapers. The study examined the content of three English regional newspapers over a 10-week period, during and after the British general election in 2005, in order to identify gender differences in the sources used. It confirmed the same results of previous studies, male sources still dominating the news, even when the reporters were women.

The relationship between the gender of a journalist and evolutions of the journalist and the journalist’s writing has also been investigated. There is some evidence that the gender of the journalist and the topic of the article influence the evaluation of the reader. Shaw *et al*., (1981) tested the effect of the gender of the bylined reporter on the perceptions of newspaper readers, especially when connected to a story traditionally written by the opposite sex. They found that fashion stories with female bylines are likely to be viewed as more interesting and clearer than identical stories with male bylines. Sports stories carrying male bylines are likely to be evaluated as more interesting, dramatic and active, than the same story with a female byline.

Similarly, Burkhart (1989) determined that merely changing one letter in a byline, from *Mark* to *Mary*, can make a difference in reader evaluations of a journalist’s credibility. He found that women were considered to be more accurate, and better

writers than men. He also reported that women writers were found to be more trustworthy, more intelligent, and more credible. Sweger (1981) found that identical news stories with a female versus a male byline were evaluated more positively and that males assessed stories with a female byline to be significantly more believable than stories with no byline or a male byline.

Other empirical studies of journalists have provided evidence that women cover news differently from men. Peiser (2000) examined gender differences in German journalism and looked at how journalists ranked issues. He found that female journalists place more emphasis on issues involving the humanities and less importance on abstractions and institutions than male journalists.

Rodgers and Thorson (2003) investigated the news coverage of male and female journalists in three US daily newspapers. The study aimed at determining whether gender differences resulted in reporting differences. The researchers found that male and female journalists practised a differentiated journalism in terms of style, tone, and sources. Women tend to include more diverse sources, are more positive, and are less likely to employ stereotypes.

Similarly, Craft and Wanta (2004) carried out a study to explore the influence of gender among journalists and editors. They analyzed 1,400 articles from 30 U.S. daily newspapers in order to compare issue agendas and story focus at newspapers with relatively high percentages of women in editorial positions with those at newspapers with lower percentages of female editors. The study showed that in newspapers with a high percentage of women editors, male and female reporters cover similar issues. On the contrary, in newspapers with a low percentage of women editors, male and female reporters cover different issues. According to Craft and Wanta (2004), “male

dominated newsrooms, meanwhile, tended to have male reporters cover political beats. Female reporters at these newspapers conversely were more likely to cover business and education beats" (p.135).

Schoch (2013) explored the effect of gender in the writing of women sport journalists. Using a content analysis approach, the study investigated the specificity of women sports journalists' writing in the context of the French-speaking Swiss daily press. Schoch found that women sports journalists have their own 'feminine' writing and they do not adopt the customary professional norms of this journalistic speciality. This 'feminine' writing is characterized by an interest in soft news and a 'human' perspective which is different from the usual treatment of sports news, that focused on facts and technical analysis, developed by the large majority of their male colleagues.

However, a number of studies and surveys of journalists have not found any substantial differences between female and male journalists in general (Weaver *et al*. 2007; Lavie and Lehman-Wilzig, 2005; and Ramaprasad, 2001). Hanitzsch and Hanusch (2012) supported this view in a large-scale comparative survey into gender differences in journalists. Their large-scale study explored the relationship between journalists' professional values and gender across the individual, organizational and societal levels of analysis. The study examined data from simultaneously conducted surveys in 18 countries around the world, including Australia, Austria, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Egypt, Germany, Indonesia, Israel, Mexico, Romania, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Uganda and the United States. A total of 100 journalists were interviewed in each of the 18 countries and fully standardized surveys were conducted. The results of the study found few differences which Hanitzsch and Hanusch described as "small and often negligible" (p.274). According to them, none

of the three levels of analysis showed meaningful or strong patterns of gender differences.

There is also a number of comparative studies and surveys that have been conducted with the goal of revealing journalists' characteristics. David Weaver (1998) conducted a study to examine journalists' attitudes and values around the world. He collected the results of surveys among national journalists in more than twenty countries across different continents. Weaver concluded that it is a difficult mission to detect universal patterns in the opinions and ethical values of journalists. Similar conclusions were reported in other global journalism surveys (Alia *et al*., 1996; Herbert, 2000; and Hanitzsch, 2007). According to Balčytienė *et al*., (2011, p.223), the main line of comparative journalism surveys conducted during the 1980s and the 1990s can be summarized as follows:

- The typical journalist is male and highly educated.
- Female journalists and journalists from an ethnic minority background remain underrepresented in the media.
- There is very limited consensus among journalists of different countries about professional values.
- Large differences in attitudes on statements related to ethical aspects of journalism are rooted in cultural differences and journalistic development traditions between different countries.

The previous sections have reviewed media studies in relation to gender in journalism in general. However, since the concern of the present study is the discourse of opinion columns, the following section will have a deeper look at the genre of newspaper columns, which is a unique form of persuasive writing that appears in almost all newspapers all over the world.

2.4. Column Writing

A column is one of the most highly sought sections in a newspaper and a "privileged piece of real estate in any publication that many journalists would like to have" (Lynch, 2012, p. 234). Columns are often called the human face of journalism and can be defined as "a personal, authored, and often recurring opinion articles that address public events or issues and are published on a consistent and predictable cycle in a fixed place in the newspaper" (Zelizer and Allan, 2010, p.21). According to Vaughn (2007), columns began appearing in the late 1800s and the beginning of the 1900s in daily newspapers in numerous places around the globe, although the first column in the US '*Journal of Occurrences*' was distributed in Boston in 1768.

Columns are basic units of vertical design that contain short essays or articles appearing regularly in newspapers and "written on one broad subject by one writer" (Lyon, 2003, p. 31). What makes a "column" is that it appears regularly either by the same writer every time or by different writers, and it is always there, same place, same length, and same format (Lick, 2007, p.46). Most columns present the subjective views of the columnists since columnists are permitted to be opinionated and to develop their own voice and style of writing (Lynch, 2012). Standring (2008) described columns as a unique and beloved genre that requires a strong personal point of view and personal bias. According to her, "no other form of journalism but column writing allows the writer's individuality to shape both a message and a self-portrait"(p. 13). The purpose of writing a column depends on the columnist and the subject. The columnist may wish to entertain, inform, inspire, persuade, or achieve several of these purposes (Lyon, 2003).

Columns cover a wide range of different subject, “from gardening to politics, from cricket to country matters” (Stephenson, 1998, p. 68). Columnists can deal with topics of general interest and also with specialized topics that suit particular readers. They may focus on topics such as: *health, books, industry, movies, computers, medicine, fitness, beauty, travel, fashion,* and *consumer information* (De Kantzow and Stubbs, 2000). Columns are also of different types and functions. Cruz (1997), made a general classification of newspaper columns according to purpose and according to content. Columns according to purpose are classified into: *editorial column, reader’s column, sport column, business column, art column, women’s column, entertainment column*, and *reviews*. Columns according to content are classified into: *the opinion column, the hodge-podge column, the essay column, the gossip column,* and *the dopester’s column.*

A column is generally shorter than a newspaper or magazine article usually between 400 and 1,000 words (Roza, 2007). The structure of a column is designed vertically, so that readers can scan it easily. The following features are usually included in newspapers columns (De Kantzow and Stubbs, 2000):

- A title which states the name or subject of the column.
- A byline stating the name of the writer, often accompanied by a photograph.
- A brief introduction summarizing the main ideas or topics covered in the column.
- Details in point form or in paragraphs topped by subheadings.
- A conclusion which refocuses the reader on the main topic and leaves them with something to think about.
- Some columns may present several separate articles on the same broad topic. Each of these sections will have its own subheading followed by details and a short conclusion.

De Kantzow and Stubbs (2000, p.121) listed some of the language features which characterize columns as the following:

- A conversational tone is created through the use of second person narrative 'you'.
- Point form is often used rather than complete sentences.
- Technical language or jargon is used to give creditability to informational texts.
- Facts and statistics are used to support the writer's opinion.
- Instructional verbs are used to give clear directions, for example, 'measure', 'avoid', and 'plan'.
- Rhetorical questions to make the reader feel personally involved in the topic. For example, 'Are you happy with your appearance?'.
- Simple present tense is most often used.

Columns are regarded as highly significant for newspapers and popular columnists are a source of commercial value for printed media. According to Young (2010), columns have a commercial value because they tend to be read quite well and can build up a following and "the power of columnists stem from the way they can sit between the ideals of objectivity and the use of polemic as a form of entertainment. They styled themselves differently using emotive, attention-grabbing, provocative language designed to grab readers' attention and provoke feelings and responses" (p.274). Columnists were and will be "always one of the most popular features of any newspaper" (Chapin, 1996, p.251), and good columnists will always help to draw readers into the publication and into the section in which they are found (Lynch, 2012). Despite the fact that columns are basic units in all newspapers, they are often mixed up with editorials. Therefore, the following section distinguishes between editorials and opinion columns and reviews some literature on newspaper columns.

2.4.1. Opinion Columns and Editorials

Opinion columns and editorials are two of the basic structural components of any newspaper. Van Dijk (1985), viewed editorials and opinion columns as "a form of public discourse which reproduces existent opinions, values, ideologies and power structures" (p.232). According to Matus-Mendoza and De Rycker (2013, p. 401), both opinion columns and editorials are text genre that constitute a form of persuasive writing in that they do not merely report, reproduce and reinforce but also create discourses by putting certain larger political or social problems on the agenda or offering novel or divergent opinions.

Despite these similarities, there are some important differences between the two genres. An editorial refers to an opinion piece of written by the senior editorial staff or the publisher of a newspaper appearing on the leader page or the editorial page in a newspaper and it is usually "made up of two or three individual comment pieces that reflect the newspaper's own opinions on the news stories of the day" (Pape and Featherstone, 2005, p. 123). Editorials usually present comments on current events and offer evaluations of given situations. They are the voice of the newspaper and they use subjective writing (Lynch, 2012).

By contrast, opinion columns discuss issues and express views that "do not necessarily reflect the newspaper's agenda-setting policies or agree with its views on a particular issues, nor those of other columnists" (Matus-Mendoza and De Rycker, 2013, p. 401). Another difference between editorials and opinion columns is that, columns are usually bylined while editorials are almost always left unsigned (Riley, 1998).

The genre of editorials has been the concern of a wealth literature. Research on newspaper editorials has been carried out from different perspectives by Van Dijk, (1992); Bolívar, (1994); Hawes and Thomas, (1996); Hackett and Zhao, (1994); Bauer, (1994); Connor, (1996); de Carvalho, (1999); Le, (2003); and others. On the other hand, research on opinion columns is common in corpus linguistics and media studies (Haarman and Lombardo, 2009). According to Friginal and Hardy (2014), content analyses of opinion columns have focused on political debate, evaluation of competing policy views, and thematic variations, while sociolinguistic studies of opinion columns have focused on the gender of the authors, topical or register variations, and cross-linguistic comparisons. The following paragraphs review a number of studies that have examined the genre of opinion columns in newspaper discourse.

Grauer (1984) examined the wit and the wisdom of twelve of the U.S. best known columnists. He discussed the social and the political significance of those columnists and their role in focusing public attention on specific issues. He also looked at the differences and assessed their role in history.

White and Andsager (1991) designed an experiment to test the effect of gender on perceived credibility of newspaper columnists. The experiment was based on two hypothesis: (1), "reader will perceive writers of their own gender to be more credible and to create more interesting material than writers of the opposite gender; (2), when writing about gender-specific topics, female writers will be perceived to be more credible and to create more interesting material than male writers when writing about a 'female' topic, and males will be perceived to be more credible and to create more

interesting material when writing about a 'male' topic" (p.712). 305 students participated in the experiment and three columns from *The New York Times* were used. The results of the study confirmed the first hypothesis and showed that women found newspaper opinion columns written by women more interesting than those written by men, while men felt the same about male-written columns. The study also reported that the topic of the column had no effect on the perceived credibility of the writer.

Murphy (2005) examined the frequency of certain linguistic features in two comparable corpora of English and Italian opinion articles on the 1999 Kosovo crisis. The analysis investigated the lexicogrammatical markers of attribution such as the use of first person verbs and impersonal structures with evaluative functions, adverbs of stance and reporting markers. The findings of the study showed that English opinion articles were much more explicitly personal, and they encourage suspicion in the reader than Italian articles. They also indicated that English articles appear to encourage a critical view and an attitude of debate in the reader, while the Italian articles tend to dictate more the way things stand or should be read.

Friginal and Hardy (2014) investigated cross-cultural and cross-register variation from four corpora of Internet blogs and online opinion columns written in English by Filipino and American authors. By applying a multi-dimensional analysis, they compared the distribution of linguistic characteristics in four dimensions: informational vs. personal focus, addressee focus, thematic variation, and narrative style. The study reported significant variations in the linguistic composition of Filipino and American texts. It also showed that unlike American opinion columns, Filipino columns were more formal and scholarly, somewhat similar in linguistic composition to newspaper articles, and slightly less personal than American columns.

The discourse of newspapers has been the subject of many studies. In contrast, column writing has received little attention from scholars. No study so far, to my knowledge, has compared and contrasted British and Saudi columnists of both genders in their use of English from a linguistic-stylistic perspective. Therefore, the current study seeks to explore the linguistic and the stylistic characteristics in column writing. It focuses on two main dimensions British/Saudi columnists and males/females, and it examines the differences and the similarities between these two dimensions in language use.

Summary of the Chapter

Media have frequently been considered as a central force and effective source in shaping public social perceptions. Media have also become important sources for learning about the world of gender. "Through their themes, storylines, characterizations, and dialogue, the media provide countless examples of how men and women should look, act, and be" (Ward and Caruthers, 2002, p.688).

This chapter has focused on the complex relation that exists between gender and the media world. It has presented a general overview of how gender has its place in media discourse and how men and women have been portrayed in stereotypical ways that reflect social views of gender. It has shown how academic researchers and scholars have continued to identify and map the ways in which gender, language, and media influence one another.

This chapter has also tried to present some of the diverse approaches found under the umbrella of media discourse. It has surveyed the most current leading research

methodologies that have been used in the study of media discourse such as content analysis, discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, and semiotics.

In addition, the chapter has provided a comprehensive review of the literature on media and gender research from a broad range of conceptual and methodological approaches. Within these media studies, many gender research studies have supported evidence of stereotypical portrayals of men and women, underrepresentation of women, male dominance, gender biases, gender differences, gender different roles, and gender stereotypes. Moreover, the chapter has considered the genre of column writing and focused on its features, its language, and its various types. It has also identified the difference between columns and editorials and reviewed some of the research conducted on newspaper columns.

In the next chapter, we will provide a general overview of the concept of metadiscourse. It will present basic definitions, conceptions and classifications of metadiscourse. Key figures and contributions to the theory of metadiscourse will be discussed. In addition, metadiscourse studies and research in various types of discourse will be reviewed.

III. Chapter Three

The Theory of Metadiscourse

Metadiscourse as a rhetorical term, designates a particular function of language, one that establishes interpersonal bonds and sustains intertextual contact. Metadiscourse outgrows its concomitant implication of referring to specific linguistic markers; it begins to symbolize the sum total of our discursive means to represent the world to our selves and to each other. In this sense metadiscourse becomes, indeed, a higher discourse dealing with principles fundamental to human communication.

(Mao, 1996, p.437)

3.0. Introduction

Metadiscourse, or reflexivity in language, is a relatively new concept that has caught the attention of numerous scholars from different research disciplines especially in research about language. In Hyland's (1998a) words, metadiscourse is "a relatively new concept but one which is increasingly important to research in composition, reading, and text structure" (p.437). According to Gea-Valor *et al*., (2010), metadiscourse is a recent applied linguistic concept coming from the development of the tenor of register and from the influence of semantics. It is a multifunctional concept that can be realized through various linguistic forms (Fløttum *et al*., 2003). In simple terms, metadiscourse is another way of looking at discourse as interaction between writer and reader.

One of the two major concerns of the present study aimed at the investigation of the theory of metadiscourse in the journalistic discourse of newspaper opinion columns. Therefore, this chapter is devoted to the concept of metadiscourse. It covers metadiscourse's definitions, devices, taxonomies, and models. In addition, studies of metadiscourse and relevant literature are fully presented. The chapter presents in some details studies of metadiscourse in academic and media discourses and also reviews comparative, cross-cultural and gender studies of metadiscourse.

3.1. Definitions of Metadiscourse

Metadiscourse is commonly defined as discourse about discourse or communication about communication (Vande Kopple, 1985, p.83). The term 'metadiscourse', also known as metatext or metalanguage, was coined by the linguist Zellig Harris in 1959 to offer a way of understanding language in use, representing a writer's or speaker's

attempts to guide a receiver's perception of a text (Hyland, 2005b). The scope of metadiscourse has been defined differently by many scholars. For Vande Kopple (1980), metadiscourse is writing that signals the presence of the author and that focuses on the speech acts. Williams (1989, p. 226), stated that metadiscourse is writing about writing, whatever does not refer to the subject matter being addressed. According to him, this includes all connective devices, all comments about the author's attitude, all the comments about the writer's confidence, and references to the audience. Crismore *et al*., (1993, p.40), defined metadiscourse as linguistic material that does not add to the propositional content of the text but it is intended to help the listener or reader organize, interpret, and evaluate the information given. In Hyland's words (2005a), metadiscourse is "a widely used term in current discourse analysis and language education, referring to an interesting, and relatively new, approach to conceptualizing interactions between text producers and their texts and between text producers and users" (p.1). According to Hyland & Tse (2004), metadiscourse is an umbrella term encompassing a range of devices used by writers to organize their text, engage their readers and signal their attitudes to their text and their audience (p.156). In 2013, Hyland provided a clear definition of metadiscourse in order to avoid the ambiguity surrounding the term 'metadiscourse': Metadiscourse is the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community (Hyland, 2013, p. 65).

Metadiscourse has always been a fuzzy concept, since it lacks definite boundaries and sometimes it may happen that it would be difficult to make a distinction between metadiscoursal and non-metadiscoursal categories (Ädel, 2006). In other words, this fuzziness happens because metadiscourse can be realized by a whole array of different

linguistic devices ranging from punctuation to utterances, phrases, and sentences and in some cases it is difficult to distinguish between textual and the interpersonal function since they can be performing the same communicative task simultaneously. According to Bamford & Bondi (2005), this fuzziness "is not necessarily a negative trait because it reflects the complexity of textual organization and communication and despite its classificatory shortcomings remains a useful analytical tool for dealing with a very frequent pattern in discourse" (p.18).

In sum, metadiscourse refers to the various linguistic resources which "explicitly organize the discourse, engage the audience and signal the writer's (speaker's) attitude" (Hyland, 1998b, p. 437). These linguistic resources have been classified by different linguists and discourse analysts as the following section presents.

3.2. Metadiscourse Classifications

There have been a number of classifications and taxonomies of metadiscourse proposed by researchers such as Vande Kopple, 1985; Crismore *et al*., 1993; Beauvais, 1989; Hyland, 1998b, 2005a; and Dafouz-Milne, 2003. Most of these classifications drew on a functional perspective and adopted a conception of metadiscourse that has two major components: *Textual* and *Interpersonal*. Textual metadiscourse or textual markers refer to the organizational devices that hold the discourse together and make it reader/listener-friendly, while the interpersonal markers reflect the writer/speaker stance towards both the propositional content and the potential addressee (Dafouz-Milne & Núñez Perucha, 2010). According to Cavalieri (2011), most metadiscourse researchers have applied a functional approach to texts, and have drawn on Hallidayan Systematic Functional Linguistics to build their taxonomies.

Vande Kopple (1985) introduced the first model of metadiscourse based on Halliday's metafunctions of language. It is regarded as the most widely used classification system of metadiscourse in analyzing discourse (Bamford and Bondi, 2005). Vande Kopple divided metadiscourse into two major categories: *textual metadiscourse* and *interpersonal metadiscourse.* According to him, textual metadiscourse "shows how we link and relate individual propositions so that they form a cohesive and coherent text and how individual elements of those propositions make sense in conjunction with other elements of the text. Interpersonal metadiscourse "helps to express our personalities and our relations to the propositional content of our texts and characterizes the interaction we would like to have with our readers about that content." (Vande Kopple, 1985, p. 87). Vande Kopple's model included seven categories: text connectives, code glosses, illocution markers, narrators, validity markers, attitude markers, and commentary. Vande Kopple's model has been applied successively in numerous studies and has enhanced further taxonomies of metadiscourse.

Crismore *et al*., (1993), introduced a modified classification scheme of metadiscourse initially proposed by Vande Kopple (1985), keeping the latter's two major categories of *textual metadiscourse* and *interpersonal metadiscourse* as shown in Table (3). According to Crismore *et al*., (1993, p.39), the overall function of metadiscourse is said to be the writers' directions for "how readers should read, react to, evaluate what they have written about the subject matter". These authors also argued that "writers convey their personality, creditability, considerateness of the reader and relationship to the subject matter and to readers by using certain devices in their texts" (Crismore *et al*., 1993, p.40).

Table 3. *Crismore et al.'s Categorization of Metadiscourse (1993:47-54).*

Category	Function	Examples
Textual metadiscourse		
1. Textual markers		
Logical connectives	Show connections between ideas	therefore; so; in addition; and
Sequences	Indicate sequence/ordering of material	first; next; finally; 1, 2, 3
Reminders	Refer to earlier text material	as we saw in Chapter one
Topicalizers	Indicate a shift in topic	well; now I will discuss . . .
2. Interpretive markers		
Code glosses	Explain text material	for example; that is
Illocution markers	Name the act performed	to conclude; in sum; I predict
Announcements	Announce upcoming material	in the next section ...
Interpersonal metadiscourse		
Hedges	Show uncertainty to truth of assertion	might; possible; likely
Certainty markers	Express full commitment to assertion	certainly; know; shows
Attributors	Give source/support of information	Smith claims that ...
Attitude markers	Display writer's affective values	I hope/agree; surprisingly
Commentary	Build relationship with reader	you may not agree that ..

***Note**:* From "Metadiscourse: Exploring Interaction in Writing" by Hyland, K. (2005a). London: Continuum. (p.34).

Following Crismore *et al*., Hyland (1998a, 2004) has carried out several studies of metadiscourse in academic writing and identified different categories of metadiscourse. Hyland (1998a), analyzed research articles in English from four academic disciplines, while Hyland (2004), analyzed textbooks' chapters. He has also examined metadiscourse in business communication, especially in CEOs' letters. According to Ädel (2006), the Hyland taxonomy is said to be a modified version of Crismore *et al*.'s (1993), although the majority of the categories correspond to the original Vande Kopple model.

However, Hyland and Tse (2004) argued for renaming types, using the label *interactive* to replace textual and *interactional* to replace interpersonal. Hyland (2005), based on previous theoretical models and empirical research, developed a classification scheme of metadiscourse which regards metadiscourse "as the ways writers refer to the text, the writer or the reader" (Hyland, 2013, p. 76). The model recognizes that metadiscourse is comprised of two dimensions of interaction: interactive and interactional, as summarized in Table (4). However, a detailed account of Hyland's model of metadiscourse along with the *interactive* and *interactional* categories is presented in the next methodology chapter since this study adopted Hyland's (2005) model of metadiscourse to investigate the metadiscourse markers in British and Saudi columns.

Table 4. *The Interpersonal Model of Metadiscourse, Hyland (2005).*

Category	Function	Examples
Interactive	***Help to guide the reader through the text***	***Resources***
Transitions	Express relations between main clauses	in addition; but; thus; and
Frame Markers	Refer to discourse acts, sequences or stages	finally; to conclude; my purpose
Endophoric Markers	Refer to information in other parts of the text	noted above; see fig; in section 2
Evidentials	Refer to information from other texts	according to X; Z states
Code glosses	Elaborate propositional meanings	namely; e.g.; such as; in other words
Interactional	***Involve the reader in the text***	***Resources***
Hedges	Withhold commitment and open dialogue	might; perhaps; possible;
Boosters	Emphasize certainty or close dialogue	in fact; definitely; it is clear that
Attitude Markers	Express writer's attitude to proposition	unfortunately; I agree; surprisingly
Self mentions	Explicit reference to author(s)	I; we; my; me; our
Engagement Markers	Explicitly build relationship with reader	consider; note; you can see that

Note: From "Metadiscourse: Exploring Interaction in Writing" by Hyland, K. (2005a). London: Continuum.

The latest contribution to metadiscourse systems was found in Ädel's (2006) work on the use of metadiscourse by British and American writers and Swedish writers. Based on Jacobson's three functions of language, Ädel presented a model of

metadiscourse that comprises: *text-oriented, writer-oriented, reader-oriented,* and *participant-oriented metadiscourse*. This allows her to focus on reflexivity and to categorize metadiscourse in terms of personal (visible, explicit) and impersonal metadiscourse (Aguilar, 2008).

The previous section has described briefly basic taxonomies of metadiscourse used in analyzing oral and written discourse. A general overview of key studies in metadiscourse research from various perspectives is provided in the following sections following a chronological order where possible, and special attention is given to comparative and cross-cultural studies of metadiscourse.

3.3. Research In Metadiscourse

Metadiscourse has been a major area of investigations since the eighties with pioneering work of Crismore (1982, 1983, 1984a/b, 1989c, 1990a/b), and Vande Kopple (1985a/b, 1990) in the field. According to Aguilar (2008), Crismore was the researcher who published by far the most on metadiscourse in the eighties. In Crismore's early work, metadiscourse was addressed for pedagogical purposes. She compared nine history and social studies textbooks to nine trade history or social science books. She found that metadiscourse features were used more frequently in historical writing but typically edited out of textbooks. Crismore encouraged instructors to include metadiscourse with other textual cues in textbooks in order to improve them and made more reader-friendly. She also proposed a typology of 'textbookese' metadiscourse that consists of two categories:

I- The informational or referential category, with three subtypes: *global goal statements*, *global preliminary statements*, and *global review statements*.
II- The attitudinal category, with four subtypes: *saliency, emphatics, hedges,* and *evaluative*.

Crismore later collaborated with Vande Kopple (1988) in investigating the value of hedges in science passages for readers' learning and attitudes and found that students learnt more from texts which included more hedges than from texts in which they were missing. Crismore and Farnsworth (1990), drawing on Vande Kopple's schema of metadiscourse, studied metadiscourse across genres. They examined the use of metadiscourse in popular and professional science discourse and found that there were more *attitude markers* and *commentary* in professional papers and fewer *hedges* and *boosters* in the Gould popularization. In 1993, Crismore collaborated with Markkanen and Steffensen's in a comprehensive study and investigated the use of metadiscourse in persuasive essays. According to Hyland (2005a), the most influential comparative study of metadiscourse is Crismore, Markkanen and Steffensen's (1993) analysis of US and Finnish students' use of metadiscourse in 40 persuasive essays. The study compared the native languages of two groups. This research broke new ground in both Contrastive Rhetoric and metadiscourse studies by addressing the possible universality of metadiscourse and the potential validity of its categories across languages. Crismore *et al.,* found that while both groups used all categories of metadiscourse and employed far more interactional than interactive metadiscourse, the Finnish students had a higher density of metadiscourse per line than the Americans. The study also reported cultural differences in the use of metadiscourse in the sub-categories, with the Finnish writers using substantially more *attitude markers* and *hedges.*

The literature on metadiscourse comprises two main strands of study as identified by Mauranen (1993): I- *the integrative approach*, which considers both interpersonal and textual metadiscourse; II- *the non-integrative approach*, which distinguishes between metadiscourse and valuation and focuses strictly on the reflexive nature of

metadiscourse. On the one hand, *the integrative approach,* sometimes called the interactive model of metadiscourse, embraces a broad range of linguistic categories such as connectors, hedges, boosters, and emphatics which show how the text is organized and display the writer's attitudes to what is being said in the text. Most works on metadiscourse correspond to this broad approach such as Vande Kopple (1985, 1988), Markkanen *et al*., (1993), Crismore *et al.,* (1993), Luukka (1994), Hyland (1998a/b, 2004), and Dafouz-Milne (2003). On the other hand, the narrow *non-integrative approach* to metadiscourse primarily investigates aspects of text organization, while largely excluding interpersonal elements (Ädel, 2006). According to Pérez-Llantada (2012), the non-integrative approach, following Jackobson, draws attention to the discourse functions of metadiscourse resources in three foci: the text/code, the writer, and the reader. Some of the works that take this narrow approach of metadiscourse are Schiffrin (1980), Mauranen (1993), Bäcklund (1998), Bunton (1999), and Dahl (2004). The present study is in line with the integrative approach to metadiscourse as it considers both interactive and interactional metadiscourse in the journalistic discourse of opinion columns.

There has been a recent widespread interest in analyzing metadiscourse in various avenues of discourse with many emerging research and genre analysis studies. According to Hyland (2005a), metadiscourse is as a key dimension of genre analysis can help to show how language choices reflect the different purposes of writers, the different assumptions they make about their audiences, and the different kinds of interactions they create with their readers. Research into metadiscourse has adopted various methods to show how an array of linguistic and pragmatic features function to

form a rhetorical link between writers and readers (Hyland, 2005a). The following sections present literature of metadiscourse in academic discourse and media discourse. In addition, pioneering comparative and gender studies of metadiscourse are also reviewed:

3.4. Metadiscourse and Academic Writing

A noteworthy account of research has been devoted to the investigation of metadiscourse in academic discourse. Most of these studies explored the use of metadiscourse in academic writing, i.e., research articles, different parts of research articles (e.g., abstract, introduction, discussion, etc.), different types of research articles (e.g., hard sciences vs. soft sciences, empirical studies vs. non-empirical studies, etc.), as well as university student essays. According to Hyland (2005a), the fact that many of these studies have focused on academic texts is unsurprising given the internationalization of this field for both students and professional scholars. Academic writing is the most frequently studied genre in metadiscourse (Ädel, 2006). Metadiscourse studies have largely focused on a limited number of academic genres such as research articles, textbooks and dissertations (Hyland, 2005a). Among these studies of academic texts are Mauranen (1993), Telenius (1994), Valero-Garcés (1996), Bäcklund (1998), Dahl (2004), Blagojevic (2004), Hyland and Tse (2004), Ädel (2008), and Li & Wharton (2012).

One of the most valuable research studies of metadiscourse is that of Mauranen (1993). She examined metadiscourse elements and cultural differences in a contrastive corpus of English and Finnish research papers from economic journals. The results indicated that Anglo-American writers used more metatext than Finnish writers did.

Mauranen argued that the native English speakers displayed more interest in guiding and orienting readers and in making their presence felt in the text than the Finnish authors when writing in English. In another parallel study of metadiscourse elements in four Spanish and English economic texts, Valero-Garcés (1996) found similar results to Mauranen. Valero-Garcés reported that the Anglo-American economists used more metatext than the Spanish writers, with considerably more connectors and illocution markers. Telenius (1994) also reported similar results in her study of the use of metadiscourse in master's theses written by Finnish university students.

A further pilot study is Dahl (2004). Dahl studied metadiscourse variations and examined locational and rhetorical devices in research articles in three disciplines (Linguistics, Economics, and Medicine) across three languages (English, Norwegian, and French). She found little difference in the use of these devices in medical articles, but a significant difference in economic and linguistic texts. The results also showed that the French writers used much less metatext than English and Norwegian writers. Dahl concluded that there is more reader-oriented and writer-responsible academic writing culture in English and Norwegian and that linguistics and economics articles are more heterogeneous and require greater subjective interpretation than medical papers.

Similarly, Blagojevic (2004) investigated the use of metadiscourse in academic articles written in English by English and Norwegian across three disciplines (Sociology, Psychology, Philosophy). Blagojevic found that psychology writers (both English and Norwegian) are unwilling to use the explicit ways to announce to or remind the readers to the parts of the material which follows or proceeds, while philosophy writers, both English and Norwegian, are very much inclined to make

direct commentaries. The results also indicated that writing of philosophy authors are loaded with a high degree of diversity, whereas psychology writers used the highest degree of standardization in writing and sociology writers were in the middle of these two polarities.

Hyland and Tse (2004) also investigated the use of metadiscourse in postgraduate dissertations in six disciplines: Applied Linguistics, Public Administration, Business Studies, Computer Science, Electric Engineering, and Biology. The study showed that the writers of Ph.D. dissertations used more metadiscourse elements than the writers of master's theses. The study also reported that the distribution of metadiscourse markers were higher in Applied Linguistics, Public Administration, and Business Studies than in Computer Science, Electric Engineering, and Biology.

More recently, Ädel (2008) investigated the pervasive phenomenon of metadiscourse in three varieties of English, using two corpora of native-speaker writing (British and American) and one corpus of advanced learner writing (L1 Swedish). The study reported considerable differences in the use of metadiscourse, not just between the learners and the native speakers, but also between the British and American writers.

Li & Wharton (2012), in a recent comparative study of metadiscourse in the academic discourse examined the writing of two groups of undergraduate students working in two different disciplines: Literary Criticism and Translation Studies. The study found that context is a more powerful factor than discipline in accounting for variation, in that they found more notable differences between contexts than between disciplines. In a similar manner, Letsoela (2013) examines the use of metadiscourse in 60 research reports written by final year undergraduate students in National University

of Lesotho. Findings showed that students used high frequencies of interactive metadiscourse and considerably low frequencies of interactive metadiscourse and they avoid the use of self-mentions (typically first person pronouns) and engagement markers.

3.5. Metadiscourse In Media Discourse

A number of studies have also investigated interactions in the journalistic writing of newspapers using the framework of metadiscourse in order to explore the ways that writers construct their articles and how readers respond to these texts. Among these studies are (Le, 2004; Dafouz-Milne, 2008; Noorian & Biria, 2010; and Kuhi & Mojood, 2014).

Le (2004) compared the use of metadiscourse in two genres: academic texts and editorials. The study reported variations in use and fundamental differences that distinguish each genre. While both genres aim to persuade through argument, they each use metadiscourse in their own way. For example, Le found that the main function of *evidentials* in editorials was to emphasize the newspaper's seriousness, elitism and independence of mind, while in academic texts they enabled writers to show how their own work relates to earlier work in the field. Similarly, *self mention* in academic texts was often used to construct the text and present decisions, while the first person (plural) in editorials was used to reinforce the newspaper's own position on an issue.

Dafouz-Milne (2008) studied the pragmatic role of metadiscourse markers in newspaper discourse. She explored the role that metadiscourse markers play in the construction and attainment of persuasion by analyzing the textual and interpersonal

markers found in a corpus of 40 opinion columns, 20 written in English and 20 in Spanish, selected from the British *The Times* and the Spanish *El País*. She found that there are variations in the distribution and composition of metadiscourse markers, and these markers were necessary to render the text persuasive and reader-oriented.

Noorian & Biria (2010) investigated the frequency and degree of the use of interpersonal metadiscourse markers in English and Iranian opinion articles written in English. The study revealed that differences between the two groups regarding the occurrences of interpersonal markers, especially in the case of commentaries. The findings also suggested that different factors such as culture-driven preferences, genre-driven conventions, and Iranian EFL writers' extent of foreign language experience interacted in choosing the interpersonal metadiscourse markers by the columnists.

More recently, Kuhi & Mojood (2014) analyzed interactive and interactional metadiscourse resources, based on Hyland's model (2005), in a corpus of 60 newspaper editorials (written in English and Farsi). The study found that genre conventions had a determining role in the writers' choice of some metadiscourse resources that contributed to the similarities in the use of metadiscourse resources in English and Persian newspaper discourse. It also found that metadiscourse has a decisive role in construction of persuasion in newspaper editorials genre.

3.6. Comparative Studies of Metadiscourse

There has been a growing interest in investigating metadiscourse across cultures and language and this interest is reflected in a large body of comparative and contrastive studies of metadiscourse. According to Hyland (2005a), a growing body of research has sought to identify the rhetorical features of particular languages, often comparing these features to those in English texts.

In a pioneering study Hyland (2000) investigated social interaction and rhetorical features in 80 research articles from eight different disciplines. Hyland explored how academics use language differently and presented a useful framework for understanding the interactions between writers and their readers in published academic writing. The study reported disciplinary differences, with the science and engineering texts displaying less concern with establishing an explicit interactional context. According to Hyland (2000), interactional forms were more common in the soft-knowledge disciplines as philosophers were heavy users of interactional metadiscourse, employing twice as many devices as any other discipline.

Hinkel (2002) in a large-scale study compared the uses of 68 linguistic and rhetorical features in L2 texts written by advanced non-native speakers of English to those in the essays of native speakers in US universities. She investigated the frequencies and uses of these linguistic and rhetorical features in prompted writing tasks written by 1,457 undergraduates from six language groups: Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Japanese, Indonesian, and Arabic. Findings reported numerous differences that distinguished L1 essays from specific groupings of L2 essays, such as vague nouns, private and public verbs, modal verbs, amplifiers, emphatics, and tense and aspect markings. Findings also showed that nonnative writers tended to avoid argumentation and focus on 'knowledge telling' through exemplification and recounts of personal experience.

Among other works, Abdollahzadeh (2003) investigated the use of interpersonal metadiscourse in the discussion and conclusion chapters of 65 academic papers by Anglo-American writers and Iranian scholars in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT). Results reported that significant difference in the use of *boosters* and

attitude markers in the discussion sections of research papers with Anglo-American writers using significantly higher instances of these metadiscourse devices than their Iranian counterparts. Results also showed no significant difference in the use of hedges between the two groups.

3.7. Gender Studies of Metadiscourse

Studies of metadiscourse have also looked at gender variation and the use of metadiscourse in different discourse. These studies investigate the impact of gender on metadiscourse. That is, the gender of the writer could influence how much or what types of metadiscourse are used (Ädel, 2006). Only a few studies addressed gender variation on metadiscourse (Crismore *et al*., 1993; Francis, *et al*., 2001; Tse & Hyland, 2008) and confirmed that male and female writers did employ metadiscourse devices differently in their written discourse.

Crismore *et al*., (1993) studied the effect of gender and culture on the writing of American and Finnish university students. The study examined patterns of metadiscourse in 20 persuasive texts from each country, 10 written by males and 10 written by females who were upper-level undergraduates or graduates. Modified classification of Van Kopple's (1985) system of metadiscourse was applied in the analysis. Crismore *et al*., found both cultural and gender similarities and differences as well as cultural-gender interaction. Findings showed that both sets of students have used more interpersonal than textual metadiscourse and Finnish students hedged more than U.S. students. Regarding gender differences, the study found that males used more hedges in their texts than female, and that females used more commentary and interpretives than males.

Francis *et al*., (2001) tested the correlation between gender and writing by analyzing the writing of undergraduate final year students from four different London universities. 87 pieces of writing by students from the history department were examined. These essays were analyzed in terms of writing style and tone of the text. The research main finding was that there is far more similarity than difference according to gender in history students' writing style. In addition, the study found that there was greater adoption of a bold style by male students. According to Francis *et al*., (2001), the use of the 'bold' style was slightly more evident in male essays, and that there was a somewhat larger gender gap in use of the 'very bold' style. The study argued that the academic style is largely a masculine one, privileging as it does notions of objectivity and rationality.

Tse & Hyland (2006) examined male and female academics' use of metadiscourse resources in a corpus of 84 academic book reviews in three contrasting disciplines of Philosophy, Biology, and Sociology. The study found that men and women reviewers generally shared more similarities than differences. It also identified some gender-preferential uses of metadiscourse. For example, men reviewers were more likely to use hedges and boosters, whereas women reviewers tended to employ more self-mentions and engagement markers. The study argued that gender is an important source of disciplinary variation but it does not seem to be a major variable in writers' choices of metadiscourse as these choices are heavily influenced by disciplinary considerations.

In a more recent study, Tse & Hyland (2008) explored the issue of gender by focusing on metadiscourse features in 56 reviews of single-authored academic books and interviews with academics from Philosophy and Biology. The study found some

gender variations in both disciplines. In Philosophy, female philosophers tended to use more interactive features than male and were particularly heavy users of transition markers. Males, in contrast, used far more engagement markers and boosters. Whereas in Biology, the study reported broad gender differences as males used more transition markers, hedges, boosters and code glosses, while females made slightly more use of self-mentions and attitudinal lexis. The study concluded with the suggestion that there is no one-to-one relation between gender and language.

On the basis of previous research reviewed, it can be assumed that metadiscourse has been investigated in various text types such as book reviews, academic writing, textbooks, and students' writings, media discourse, but still relatively little attention has been given to newspaper discourse, particularly opinion columns. The few studies that do exist explored metadiscourse in a limited number of written discourses. For example, Dafouz-Milne (2008), studied metadiscourse in a corpus of 40 columns and Kuhi & Mojood (2014), analyzed metadiscourse resources, in a corpus of 60 newspaper editorials. The corpus of the present study consisted of 320 opinion columns of four elite British and Saudi newspapers. This study uses a corpus of 273,773 words in order to explore metadiscourse devices and argue that these devices provide a better way of understanding the intended messages of opinion columnists. Investigation of metadiscourse in both corpora makes it possible to identify the common features of the genre of opinion columns. It is hoped that this study will overcome this limitation of corpus in earlier studies and contribute to the corpus-based research of metadiscourse.

In addition, the literature of metadiscourse showed that gender examination of metadiscourse use has not received adequate attention in spite of the fact that scholars working on written language have been increasingly concerned with investigation of metadiscourse. According to Tse & Hyland (2006), gender is one relatively neglected aspect in the literature on variation in academic discourse and "we know very little about gender-preferential features in academic writing" (p.177). The same is true in newspaper discourse; only few studies have handled the role of gender on the use of metadiscourse in opinion column writing. Therefore, the current study will focus on gender variation and hopefully be a useful addition to the existing knowledge of metadiscourse by investigating possible gender differences among writers in the genre of opinion columns.

As virtually no research of metadiscourse has been done in the discourse of opinion columns in British and Saudi press, at least to my knowledge, this study was conducted to explore gender and metadiscourse and contribute to the big fields of language and gender and discourse analysis.

Summary of the Chapter

Linguistic markers of metadiscourse serve interpersonal and textual purposes in written discourses. Writers use metadiscourse to maintain a direct relation with the audience and communicate their intended messages. This chapter was mainly devoted to the concept of metadiscourse. It provided a brief picture of the term 'metadiscourse' and discussed its key elements. Pioneering works with key figures in the growing field of metadiscourse were presented. The chapter also reviewed historically the categorization schemes that have been proposed in the literature of metadiscourse. The

chapter looked at range of studies which explored basic features of metadiscourse in different discourse: academic and media. Studies examining the impact of gender and culture on metadiscourse use have been also reviewed.

In the next chapter, we provide a detailed description of the design of this research study. Chapter four begins with a general overview of the methodological framework adopted for the study. The chapter is structured around the research objectives, data collection, the quantitative tools and data analysis. The chapter also defines the scope and the limitations of the research. British and Saudi Newspapers selected for the study as well as the status of English in Saudi Arabia are also presented.

IV. Chapter Four

Methodological Framework & Design of the Study

The methods section is the most important aspect of a research paper because it provides the information by which the validity of a study is ultimately judged.

(Kallet, 2004, p. 1229)

4.0. Introduction

The previous three chapters have focused primarily on introducing much of the research that has been conducted on the field of language and gender and media discourse as well. The purpose of this chapter is to present the research perspectives and the methodological approach used in the study, as well as to introduce other research tools and techniques applied. This chapter also details the study's goals, the questions being explored, and the research procedures. In addition, it presents the data under investigation, i.e. the newspaper columns from the British and the Saudi press, and discusses the selection of the data sample and data analysis methods.

The chapter also provides an extensive account of the linguistic methods and techniques underpinning this research. It delineates basic information about the analytical tools used: AntConc software, Chi-Square Statistics ($\times^2$ Test), Normalization, and Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) program. In addition, it describes fully Hyland's model of metadiscourse markers (2005). The final section of the chapter presents the British newspapers (*The Times* and *The Guardian*) and the Saudi ones (*The Saudi Gazette* and *The Arab News*). It also sheds light on the status of the English language in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

4.1. Aim and Questions of the Study

The present linguistic comparative study is basically concerned with exploring gender and metadiscourse quantitatively, with some qualitative analysis of topics and style in the genre of opinion columns. The main aims of the present study are threefold. First, the study aims to examine gender differences and similarities in British columnists in the one hand and Saudi columnists on the other hand. It also investigates

the possible variations or similarities between British and Saudi columnists in their use of English. Second, the study also aims to explore the use of metadiscourse devices in column writing and identify which metadiscourse categories predominate in the sample of the study. Third, the study sets out to identify gender differences in topic-selection and writing style. With these aims in mind, the study seeks to ask the following questions:

- To what extent do male and female columnists use the language differently?
- Are there similarities or differences between native and nonnative writers in the journalistic discourse of opinion column regarding their use of metadiscourse?
- What is the type and the frequency of metadiscourse devices that have been employed in British and Saudi columns?
- Can gender differences be found on topic-selection among columnists?
- Do male columnists have particular linguistic features that can be considered as male markers?
- Do female columnists have particular linguistic features that can be considered as female markers?
- What are the linguistic features that characterize the genre of column writing?

4.2. Data Collection

The dataset of the study sampled newspaper columns that are available online from the official websites of British and Saudi newspapers. The data consist of **320** newspaper columns that were retrieved from the official websites of the four newspapers: The British newspapers (*The Times* and *The Guardian*) and the Saudi ones (*The Saudi Gazette* and *The Arab News*). The **320** columns were gathered from the four newspapers over the period of two years. More specifically, the columns were

chosen randomly during a selected period of time from the 1st of January 2013 to the 31st of December 2014. All the selected columns were published online and were also available in print newspapers. The sample of the study excluded all additional commentary texts and letters to the editor, that were published on the opinion and the comment pages from which columns were selected in all the four newspapers.

The data from the British newspapers *The Times* and *The Guardian* consists of **160** columns of which **80** were written by male columnists and **80** by female columnists. All the columns were published under the heading "Opinion: Columnists" in *The Times* and in *The Guardian's* "Comment" pages. The data obtained cover **9** male authors and **9** female authors. Most of the columnists write on a regular basis in both newspapers. A single author male/female on average contributed **9** columns. However, some irregular columnists contributed no more than **6** columns. For example, Madeleine Bunting from the Guardian published only **8** columns in all the year of 2013. Table (5) presents the names of the columnists and the number of columns in the British corpus. For more information about the columnists see appendix (**C**).

Table 5. *Names of the Columnists and Number of Columns in British Corpus*

Newspaper Names	***Columnist Names***	***Gender***	***Number of Columns***
The Times	Ben Macintyre	Male	6
	Giles Coren	Male	10
	Hugo Rifkind	Male	10
	Oliver Kamm	Male	10
	Tim Montgomerie	Male	6
	Alice Thomson	Female	10
	Caitlin Moran	Female	9
	Carol Midgley	Female	6
	Janice Turner	Female	10
	Jenni Russell	Female	9
The Guardian	Simon Jenkins	Male	11
	Seumas Milne	Male	9
	John Harris	Male	10
	Jonathan Freedland	Male	8
	Hadley Freeman	Female	6
	Lucy Mangan	Female	10
	Madeleine Bunting	Female	6
	Suzanne Moore	Female	14
Total			**160**

Similarly, the data from the Saudi newspapers *The Saudi Gazette* and *The Arab News* consists of **160** columns of which **80** were written by male columnists and **80** by female columnists. The columns collected were published under the heading "Opinion" in *The Saudi Gazette* and under the heading "Opinion: Columns" in *The Arab News*. The data obtained cover **8** male authors and **5** female authors. A single male/female author on average contributed **12** columns. Other irregular columnists contributed no more than **6** columns. It is a fact that the Saudi press has been a male-dominated field and that women constitute only a small number. There are only **3** Saudi columnists on The Saudi Gazette and **2** on The Arab News and that is why some female columnists contributed up to **20** columns. It is also worth mentioning that due to the lack of female authors in the Saudi press, their columns are published simultaneously in different newspapers. For example, the columns of Badria Al-Bishr, a female author, are published in *Saudi Gazette* newspaper and *Al-Arabia News* at the

same time. Table (6) presents the names of the columnists and the number of columns in the Saudi corpus. For more information about the columnists see appendix (**C**).

Table 6. *Names of the Columnists and Number of Columns in Saudi Corpus*

Newspaper Names	***Columnist Names***	***Gender***	***Number of Columns***
The Saudi Gazette	Dr. Ali Al-Ghamdi	Male	10
	Hussein Shobokshi	Male	10
	Dr. Khalid Al-Seghayer	Male	10
	Dr. Khaled M. Batarfi	Male	10
	Mahmoud Ahmad	Male	10
	Badria Al-Bishr	Female	14
	Imane Kurdi	Female	20
	Samar Fatany	Female	20
The Arab News	Abdulateef Al-Mulhim	Male	10
	Alaa Al-ghamdi	Male	10
	Mohammed Al-Saif	Male	10
	Hatoon Kadi	Female	6
	Sabria S. Jawhar	Female	20
Total			**160**

The sample of the study altogether consisted of 17 different male authors and 14 different female authors. The average column length in the whole sample was 645 words. The average column length in the British newspapers was 957 words. The average column length in the Saudi newspapers was 734 words. The corpus of the study altogether consisted of **273,773** words.

4.3. Reasons for Choosing the Data

Media is a rich source of readily accessible data and it can tell us a great deal about a society's values, beliefs, and its expressions of culture, politics, and social life (Haji-Othman *et al*., 2016). Newspaper Opinion columns are privileged pieces of persuasive writing that "create discourses by putting certain larger political or social problems on the agenda or offering novel and divergent opinions" (Rycker and Zuraidah, 2013, p. 401). No other form of journalism but 'column writing allows the writer's individuality

to shape both a message and a self-portrait' (Standring, 2008, p. 13). Opinion columns, in particular, were chosen for the analysis rather than other forms of press discourse such as news reports, editorials, news stories, due to a number of reasons. First, opinion columns are easily accessible authentic material. They are original pieces representing the thoughts and the work of a signed individual. Second, opinion pieces are a form of public discourse in which writers offer their opinion on the issues of the day. Van Dijk (1998), viewed opinion columns "as form of public discourse which reproduce existent opinions, values, ideologies, and power structures" (p. 232). Third, the genre of opinion columns has received inadequate attention from linguists and researchers. Only a handful number of studies have explored the language of opinion columns. Fourth, opinion columns and the views expressed in them have an important role in establishing the personality and the soul of the newspaper (Pape and Featherstone, 2006). The styles of the columns, language choices, and tones make up the overall personality of the newspaper. Finally, opinion columns are one of the few discourses in which the reader enters into a special kind of relationship with the writer. Readers can come to love the columns and look forward to their regular slots (Keeble, 1994).

4.4. Data Analysis

The study is a contrastive investigation of gender differences and metadiscourse devices in British and Saudi opinion columns. The analysis of the 320 opinion columns was conducted in two stages. The first stage aimed to investigate possible gender differences and similarities in British and Saudi writers in the context of newspaper column writing manually with the help of computational linguistic tools, regarding their use of metadiscourse and selected linguistic stylistic features. 'AntConc software' and 'Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) program' were used to identify these

gender variations and provide a comprehensive linguistic analysis of each column. The second stage aimed to explore the concept of metadiscourse. The frequency and the type of metadiscourse markers were examined and compared between British and Saudi columnists using the concordancing analysis tool 'AntConc software'. The analysis of metadiscourse markers was based on Hyland's metadiscourse model (2005). All the texts of the opinion columns were converted into electronic format to produce a corpus of 273,773 words as shown in Table (7). This corpus was searched for more than 300 metadiscourse devices (see Appendix **A**), in addition to other linguistic features such as the use of adjectives, verbs, adverbs, gender nouns, pronouns, prepositions, numerical terms and articles.

Table 7. *Corpus of Opinion Columns*

	Totals
British Male Columns	81209
British Female Columns	73564
Saudi Male columns	57675
Saudi Female columns	61325
Corpus Total	273,773 words

In order to achieve an acceptable degree of reliability in the data analysis procedure, two processes in searching for potential metadiscourse markers were applied during the textual analysis. First, the 320 columns were searched electronically using concordancing software programs. Second, all the metadiscourse markers were examined qualitatively in context to determine their actual functions, due to "the highly contextual nature of metadiscourse and the fact that a particular form can be either propositional or metadiscoursal" (Tse & Hyland, 2006, p. 180). In other words,

all instances in the columns were classified according to metadiscourse categories (deciding whether something counts as a booster, a hedge, etc.). As for the linguistic features, they were counted manually. All the columns were read word by word and searched carefully to identify frequencies of adjectives, adverbs, and verbs over the period of six months. All the totals of data frequencies in the corpus were done using Microsoft Excel. Since the opinion texts are of different lengths, the totals of the analytical data were normalized to enable a more accurate comparison of the data. All frequencies reported have been normalized to occurrences per 1,000 words to allow for comparisons across the two groups of writers. Further, a Chi-Square test was run to examine if there are any statistically significant differences in the use of metadiscourse markers and other linguistic features between male and female columnists and between British and Saudi writers in newspaper opinion columns.

The following sections provide a detailed description of the analytical methods and tests used in the study: Hyland's metadiscourse model (2005), AntConc software, Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) program, Chi-Square Statistics ($\times^2$ Test), and Normalization.

4.4.1. Hyland's Model of Metadiscourse

Hyland (2005a) described metadiscourse as a powerful analytical tool for describing discourse and mapping the ways that language is related to the social contexts in which it is used. Hyland's model of metadiscourse (2005) was based on a functional approach which regards metadiscourse as the ways writers refer to the text, the writer or the reader. This model acknowledges the contextual specificity of metadiscourse and incorporates Thompson and Thetela's (1995) distinction between

interactive and *interactional* resources to acknowledge both the organizational and evaluative features of interaction. Hyland put forth a stronger interpersonal view on metadiscourse, advocating that all metadiscourse categories are essentially interpersonal since they need to take into account the readers' knowledge, textual experiences and processing needs (Dafouz Milne & Núñez Perucha, 2010). Hyland's model recognizes that metadiscourse is comprised of the two dimensions of interaction (Hyland, 2005a, p. 49-50):

1. The interactive dimension

This concerns the writer's awareness of a participating audience and the ways he or she seeks to accommodate its probable knowledge, interests, rhetorical expectations and processing abilities. The writer's purpose here is to shape and constrain a text to meet the needs of particular readers, setting out arguments so that they will recover the writer's preferred interpretations and goals. The use of resources in this category therefore addresses ways of organizing discourse, rather than experience, and reveals the extent to which the text is constructed with the readers' needs in mind.

2. The interactional dimension

This concerns the ways writers conduct interaction by intruding and commenting on their message. The writer's goal here is to make his or her views explicit and to involve readers by allowing them to respond to the unfolding text. This is the writer's expression of a textual 'voice', or community-recognized personality, and includes the ways he or she conveys judgements and overtly aligns himself/herself with readers. Metadiscourse here is essentially evaluative and engaging, expressing solidarity, anticipating objections and responding to an imagined dialogue with others. It reveals the extent to which the writer works to jointly construct the text with readers.

According to Hyland (2013), the previous two dimensions "are defining characteristics of any communication, whether spoken or written, and are expressed through a range of rhetorical features which themselves perform more specific functions" (p.78). These features and resources of Hyland's model are discussed below and displayed in Tables (8) and (9):

Table 8. *The Interactive Dimension of Hyland Metadiscourse Model (2005)*

Category	Function	Examples
Interactive	***Help to guide the reader through the text***	***Resources***
Transitions	Express relations between main clauses	in addition; but; thus; and
Frame Markers	Refer to discourse acts, sequences or stages	finally; to conclude; my purpose
Endophoric Markers	Refer to information in other parts of the text	noted above; see fig; in section 2
Evidential	Refer to information from other texts	according to X; Z states
Code glosses	Elaborate propositional meanings	namely; e.g.; such as; in other words

Note: From "Metadiscourse: Exploring Interaction in Writing*"* by Hyland, K. (2005a). London: Continuum.

Table 9. *The Interactional Dimension of Hyland Metadiscourse Model (2005)*

Category	Function	Examples
Interactional	***Involve the reader in the text***	***Resources***
Hedges	Withhold commitment and open dialogue	might; perhaps; possible;
Boosters	Emphasize certainty or close dialogue	in fact; definitely; it is clear that
Attitude Markers	Express writer's attitude to proposition	unfortunately; I agree; surprisingly
Self mentions	Explicit reference to author(s)	I; we; my; me; our
Engagement Markers	Explicitly build relationship with reader	consider; note; you can see that

Note: From "Metadiscourse: Exploring Interaction in Writing*"* by Hyland, K. (2005a). London: Continuum.

Metadiscourse Resources

1. Interactive resources

These features are used to organize propositional information in ways that a projected target audience is likely to find coherent and convincing. They are a consequence of the writer's assessment of the reader's assumed comprehension capacities, understandings of related texts, and need for interpretive guidance, as well as the relationship between the writer and reader. There are five broad sub-categories (Hyland, 2005a, p. 50-52):

A. Transition markers: are mainly conjunctions and adverbial phrases which help readers interpret pragmatic connections between steps in an argument. They signal additive, causative and contrastive relations in the writer's thinking, expressing relationships between stretches of discourse. According to Martin and Rose (2003), there are different discourse roles played by transitions. For example, ***Addition*** adds elements to an argument and potentially consists of items such as *and, furthermore, more- over, by the way,* etc. ***Comparison*** marks arguments as either similar *(similarly, likewise, equally, in the same way, correspondingly, etc.) or different (in contrast, however, but, on the contrary, on the other hand* etc.). ***Consequence*** relations either tell readers that a conclusion is being drawn or justified *(thus, therefore, consequently, in conclusion,* etc.) or that an argument is being countered *(admittedly, nevertheless, anyway, in any case, of course)* (Hyland, 2005a, p.50).

B. Frame markers: signal text boundaries or elements of schematic text structure. These items function to sequence, label, predict and shift arguments, making the discourse clear to readers or listeners. Frame markers can therefore be used to sequence parts of the text or to internally order an argument, often acting as more

explicit additive relations (*first, then, 1/2, at the same time, next)*. They can explicitly label text stages *(to summarize, in sum, by way of introduction)*. They announce discourse goals (*I argue here, my purpose is, the paper proposes, I hope to persuade, there are several reasons why)*. In addition, they can indicate topic shifts *(well, right, OK, now, let us return to)*. Therefore, items in this category provide framing information about elements of the discourse (Hyland, 2005a, p.51).

C. Endophoric markers: are expressions which refer to other parts of the text (*see Figure 2, refer to the next section, as noted above*). These make additional ideational material salient and therefore available to the reader in aiding the recovery of the writer's meanings, often facilitating comprehension and supporting arguments by referring to earlier material or anticipating something yet to come. By guiding readers through the discussion they help steer them to a preferred interpretation or reading of the discourse (Hyland, 2005a, p.51).

D. Evidentials: guide the reader's interpretation and establish an authorial command of the subject. In some genres this may involve hearsay or attribution to a reliable source; in academic writing it refers to a community-based literature and provides important support for arguments. Evidentials distinguish *who* is responsible for a position (Hyland, 2005a, p.51).

E. Code glosses: supply additional information, by rephrasing, explaining or elaborating what has been said, to ensure the reader is able to recover the writer's intended meaning. They reflect the writer's predictions about the reader's knowledge-base and are introduced by phrases such as *this is called, in other words, that is, this can be defined as, for example,* etc. Alternatively, they are marked off by parentheses

(Hyland, 2005a, p.52).

The previous section presented the interactive dimension of Hyland's model of metadiscourse and defined the interactive resources: transitions, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidentials, and code glosses. The following section deals with the interactional dimension of Hyland's model of metadiscourse.

2. Interactional resources

These features involve readers and open opportunities for them to contribute to the discourse by alerting them to the author's perspective towards both propositional information and readers themselves. They help control the level of personality in a text as writers acknowledge and connect to others, pulling them along with their argument, focusing their attention, acknowledging their uncertainties and guiding them to interpretations. There are also five broad sub-categories (Hyland, 2005a, p. 52-54):

A. Hedges: are devices such as *possible*, *might* and *perhaps*, which indicate the writer's decision to recognize alternative voices and viewpoints and so withhold complete commitment to a proposition. Hedges emphasize the subjectivity of a position by allowing information to be presented as an opinion rather than a fact and therefore open that position to negotiation (Hyland, 2005a, p.52).

B. Boosters: on the other hand, are words such as *clearly*, *obviously* and d*emonstrate*, which allow writers to close down alternatives, head off conflicting views and express their certainty in what they say. Boosters suggest that the writer recognizes potentially diverse positions but has chosen to narrow this diversity rather than enlarge it, confronting alternatives with a single, confident voice (Hyland, 2005a, p.52).

C. Attitude markers: indicate the writer's affective, rather than epistemic, attitude to propositions. Instead of commenting on the status of information, its probable relevance, reliability or truth, attitude markers convey surprise, agreement, importance, obligation, frustration, and so on. While attitude is expressed by the use of subordination, comparatives, progressive particles, punctuation, text location, and so on, it is most explicitly signalled metadiscoursally by attitude verbs (e.g. *agree, prefer),* sentence adverbs *(unfortunately, hopefully)* and adjectives *(appropriate, logical, remarkable)* (Hyland, 2005a, p.53).

D. Self mention: refers to the degree of explicit author presence in the text measured by the frequency of first-person pronouns and possessive adjectives (/, *me, mine,* exclusive *we, our, ours)* (Hyland, 2005a, p.53). The presence or absence of explicit author reference is generally a conscious choice by writers to adopt a particular stance and a contextually situated authorial identity (Hyland, 2001b).

D. Engagement markers: are devices that explicitly address readers, either to focus their attention or include them as discourse participants such as (*let us, think of, imagine, look at, suppose, you*…etc.) (Hyland, 2005a, p.53).

The above section presented a full account of Hyland's metadiscourse model (2005). The investigation of metadiscourse markers in the sample of the study was done with the help of AntConc software and the LIWC program. The following section presents some basic information about these computational text analysis tools.

4.4.2. AntConc Software

The current study adopted Anthony's AntConc software in order to identify the metadiscourse markers in the data under investigation. AntConc is a freeware, multi-platform, multipurpose corpus analysis toolkit which includes a strong concordance, word and keyword frequency generator, tools for cluster and lexical bundles analysis and a word distribution plot (Anthony, 2005). It also offers the choice of simple wildcard searches or powerful regular expression searches, and has an extremely easy-to-use, intuitive interface. It was created and developed by Laurence Anthony at Waseda University in Japan. AntConc was first released in 2002. At the time, it was a simple KWIC (Key Word in Context) concordancer program designed for use by over 700 students in a scientific and technical writing course at the Osaka University Graduate School of Engineering (Anthony, 2005).

According to Friginal & Hardy (2014), AntConc generates a keyword list by cross tabulating frequencies, of all lexical items in the two resulting word lists, from the most frequent to the least. Each word with a high frequency of occurrence is identified as a potential keyword in each of the two lists. These words are then ordered based on their "keyness". Following the release of AntConc 1.0, the program was uploaded to the author's website from which researchers, teachers, and learners around the world could easily download and use the software free of charge for non-profit use. The latest version and the one used in the current study is AntConc 3.0. It was released in December 2004, and includes numerous tools and features, as summarized in Table (10).

Table 10. *Summary of Tools and Features in AntConc 3.0*

• Freeware License
• Small memory requirement
 	
(~2 MB of disk space)
 	
• Multiplatform
  o – Windows 95 or later
  o – Unix / Linux
• Extensive set of text analysis tools
  o – KWIC Concordance
  o – Search Term Distribution Plot
  o – Original File View
  o – Word Clusters / Lexical Bundles
  o – Word lists
  o – Keyword lists
	• Powerful Search Features
	  o – Regular Expressions (REGEX)
	  o – Extensive Wildcards
	• Multiple-Level Sorting
	• HTML/XML Tag Handling
	• Unicode Support
	• Easy-to-use, intuitive GUI

Note: From "AntConc: Design and Development of a Freeware Corpus Analysis Toolkit for the Technical Writing Classroom" by Anthony, L. (2005). Professional Communication Conference, 2005. IPCC 2005. Proceedings. International, pp. 729-737.

4.4.3. Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC)

LIWC is a computer text analysis program which was developed in the work of Pennebaker, Francis, and Booth (2001). The program was originally designed to discover which features of writing about emotional negative life experiences predict subsequent health improvement (Pennebaker and Francis, 1999). The LIWC analyzes text on a word-by-word basis, categorizes each word using 72 linguistic dimensions (e.g., pronouns, present tense, cognitive process), and determines the relative frequency of each linguistic dimension (Dzindolet *et al*., 2008). Most LIWC dimensions are hierarchically organized and can be created by the user himself/herself (Eid and Diener, 2006).

Tausczik and Pennebaker (2010), demonstrated that "the LIWC program has two central features: the processing component and the dictionaries. The processing feature is the program itself, which opens a series of text files—which can be essays, poems,

blogs, novels, and so on—and then goes through each file word by word. The dictionaries are the heart of the LIWC program" (p.27). Blankenship (2010) stated that the LIWC differs from similar programs of content analysis by scoring a word into numerous categories. For example, the word 'cried' is scored into four word categories: *sadness*, *negative emotion*, *overall affect*, and *past-tense verb*. LIWC is instrumental in its aim and thematic in its approach (Eid and Diener, 2006).

According to Friginal and Hardy (2014), LIWC's analytical structure is "unique compared to other popular linguistic taggers because of its additional focus on personal and psychological measures"(p.278). It is well developed to analyze individual or multiple language text files relatively quickly, with a high level of accuracy. The program counts and normalizes proportions of four groups of processes: *linguistic* (e.g., pronouns, word count, conjunctions), *psychological* (e.g., social, affective, cognitive), *personal concern* (e.g., work, religion, leisure, home, money), and *spoken category* (e.g., assent, fillers, nonfluencies). "All these processes are manifested through the groups of words that most effectively and characteristically capture them. The counting and the normalizing system is basically provided by a dictionary and information from test data that applied LIWC to various spoken and written corpora" (Friginal & Hardy, 2014, p. 278). The utility of LIWC in text analysis has been proved across a substantial number of domains (Dalvean, 2012). It has been applied to analyze classical literature, press conferences, and transcripts of conversations and speeches (Pennebaker & Graybeal, 2001). Tausczik and Pennebaker (2010) listed 121 studies using LIWC since the 2001 version became commercially available online.

The first version of LIWC came out in 2001 but since then there have been several modified versions. According to Pennebaker *et al*. (2010), 82 percent of the words

used in spoken and written English were included in the 2001 LIWC dictionary. The 2007 version has 80 categories, 68 of these are word categories while the remaining are structural. The total number recognized by the 2007 version is approximately 4500 including word stems and covering a large sample of written and spoken across multiple genres (Dalvean, 2012).

The version of LIWC used in the current study is (LIWC2007), the Macintosh version for Apple MacBook Pro. According to the official site of LIWC, the Macintosh version of LIWC2007 has a feature that will highlight in color all the words found in a particular file when it is analyzed. In addition, with this Macintosh version, users can also create dictionaries that include literal phrases (e.g. 'you know') as well as individual words and word stems. The current study used only the linguistic category of LIWC, excluding other categories, in the analysis of the linguistic features in the corpus in order to identify all the differences as well as the similarities that exist between British and Saudi authors. Using this text analysis program allowed us to perform an extensive linguistic analysis on each individual column in our sample of the study.

4.4.4. Normalization

'Normalization' is a way to convert raw counts into rates of occurrences, so that the scores from texts of different lengths can be compared (Lüdeling and Kytö, 2009). Normalization not only allows for researchers to compare linguistic features with one another, it also, more importantly, allows us to compare text and corpora of differing lengths (Friginal and Hardy, 2014). Since the corpus of the present study consists of British and Saudi texts, which have different lengths, normalization is a crucial step to

enable correct comparison of both corpora. Biber, Conrad, and Reppen (1998), provided a convenient formula for normalizing frequencies across texts. According to them, the raw frequency count should be divided by the number of words in the text and then multiplied by whatever basis is chosen for norming. The frequency count should be normed to the typical text length in a corpus (See Figure.1). In the present study all counts were normed to a basis of 1,000 words since the opinion texts in the corpus were about this long and the average columns often range between 800 to 1000 words in length (Hanania, 2012).

$$Normed\ Rate\ of\ Occurrence = \frac{Raw\ Frequency\ of\ Feature\ X\ in\ Text\ A}{Total\ Number\ of\ words\ in\ Text\ A} \times Norming\ Number$$

Figure (1). Calculating Normed Rates of Occurrences. ***Note.*** From "Linguistic variation in research articles: When discipline tells only part of the story", by Gray, B. (2015). Amsterdam; Philadelphia : John Benjamins Publishing, p. 52.

4.4.5. Chi-Square Statistics ($\times^2$ Test)

Chi-Square test is "a statistical test used to measure the association between two or more variables, and to see whether or not significant differences exist between them" (Clemente, 2002, p. 73). Chi-Square test or Pearson's Chi-Square test was invented by Karl Pearson in 1900. Chi-Square test is the most commonly used statistical test in corpus linguistics for testing statistical significance (McEnery *et al*., 2006). Chi-Square calculations are based on frequency distributions. They seek to determine whether or not the frequency distribution for a particular data set is similar to or significantly different from that expected by chance or some pre-determined pattern (Clark *et al*.,

1998). The Chi-Square test compares the difference between the observed values (the actual frequencies extracted from corpora) and the expected values (the frequencies that one would expect if no factor other than chance were affecting the frequencies). The greater the difference (absolute value) between the observed values and the expected values, the less likely it is the difference is due to chance. Conversely, the closer the observed values are to the expected values, the more likely it is that the difference has arisen by chance (McEnery *et al*., 2006). To interpret the Chi-Square test and find the level of significance, one need to identify *the degree of freedom* and *the P value*. The degree of freedom is the number of independent variables in the data set. The degree of freedom is calculated as a product of the number of rows minus 1 × the number of columns minus 1 (Khan *et al*., 2014). *P value* is the chance that a result as extreme as the one that was observed (or even more extreme) would have been observed under null hypothesis. If that chance is less than 5%, you can say the result is statistically significant at $P < 0.05$ (Browner, 2006).

The previous sections dealt with presenting a general overview of the computational linguistic analysis tools and tests used in the study along with Hyland's metadiscourse model (2005). The following sections provide a historical overview of the four newspapers (*The Times* and *The Guardian*) and (*The Saudi Gazette* and *The Arab News*) used in the study.

4.5. Newspapers Presented in the Study

4.5.1. British Newspapers

A. The Times

The Times is a British daily national newspaper, first published in London in 1785 when it was known as The Daily Universal Register. It was founded by the publisher John Walter (Duthel, 2011). It is one of Britain's oldest and most influential newspapers. It is generally accounted, with *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph*, one of Britain's "big three" and has long been recognized as one of the world's greatest newspapers (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1994).

Under its first great liberal editor, Thomas Barnes (editor from 1817 to 1841), *The Times* developed into a strong independent newspaper popularly described as the "Thunderer." By the mid-1800s it had become a widely respected influence on British public opinion, and its circulation had grown from 5,000 in 1815 to 40,000 in 1850 (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1994). In 1841, John T. Delane succeeded Barnes as editor of *The Times* and continued to conduct the paper with distinguished ability till his retirement in 1877 (Chambers Encyclopedia, 1885). In the 1950s, Sir William Haley, the director general of the BBC, became the editor (1952–67) (Briggs, 1995). According to Duthel (2011), *The Times* was printed in broadsheet format for 219 years, but switched to compact size in 2004 partly in an attempt to appeal to younger readers and partly to appeal to commuters using public transport. In 1999, *The Times* had an online presence and in 2009, the timesonline site had a readership of 750,000 readers per day (Clyde, 2004).

It has been considered "the UK's newspaper of record and is generally seen as a serious publication with high standards of journalism" (Duthel, 2011, p.141). The British Business Survey named *The Times* as the UK's leading daily newspaper for business people (Turner and Orange, 2013). According to the National Readership Survey, *The Times* is one of the newspapers which has the highest readers in both in print and online. In November 2010, *The Times* set up a paywall on its site, in which readers will be allowed a limited number of free views and they will then have to pay for access (Lee, 2013). Reports indicated that regular readership dropped off by 60 percent and page views fell 90 percent (Gans, 2012).

B. The Guardian

The Guardian, formerly (1821-1959) *The Manchester Guardian*, is an influential daily newspaper published in London, and is considered one of the United Kingdom's leading newspapers (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1994). *The Manchester Guardian* was founded by John Edward Taylor in 1821, and was first published on May 5 of that year. The paper's intention was the promotion of the liberal interest in the aftermath of the Peterloo Massacre and the growing campaign to repeal the Corn Laws that flourished in Manchester during this period. *The Guardian* was published weekly until 1836 when it was published on Wednesday and Saturday becoming a daily in 1855, when the abolition of Stamp Duty on newspapers permitted a subsequent reduction in cover price (to 2d) allowed the paper to be published daily (The Guardian Archives, 2002).

The Guardian's famous editor, C.P. Scott, made the newspaper nationally and internationally recognized. He remained editor for 57 years from 1872, and became its owner when he bought the paper from the estate of Taylor's son in 1907. According to

Hombach (2010), under Scott the paper's moderate editorial line became more radical, supporting Gladstone when the liberals split in 1886, and opposing the Second Boer War against popular opinion. After retiring from an active role in managing and editing the paper, Scott passed control to his two sons, John Russell Scott as manager and Edward Taylor Scott as editor (The Guardian Archives, 2002). CP Scott died in 1932 and was followed only four months later by Edward, so sole ownership fell to JR Scott. In June 1936, ownership of the paper passed to the Scott Trust (named after the last owner, John Russell Scott) and this move ensured the paper's independence (Hombach, 2010).

In 1944, A. P. Wadsworth took over the running of the paper. Wadsworth encouraged his foreign editor, Alastair Hetherington to write about the Middle East and the complexity of Israel-Palestine struggle (Shindler, 2004). The editor of the paper moved to London in 1964, committing *the Guardian* to an uncertain future in the national market, and shortly afterwards financial problems came to a head. The paper relied heavily on *the Manchester Evening News* for financial support, and in the mid-60s the threat to the paper's future grew severe enough for the chairman of the Scott Trust, Laurance Scott, to approach *the Times* to discuss the possibility of a merger. *The Times* was in a similarly perilous financial situation, and many were of the opinion that there was only room for one competitor to *the Telegraph*. Eventually the talks came to nothing, but not before a serious examination of the logistics involved had been considered on both sides. Alastair Hetherington, the editor at this time, remained a staunch advocate of *the Guardian's* independence, and the modern paper owes much to his leadership and vision during this period (The Guardian Archives, 2002).

In 1994-95 *the Guardian* began developing online publication. The paper's technology section Online went online in late 1995, and sites for jobs, certain sports, and news events followed through 1996-1998. The Guardian Unlimited network of websites was launched as a unified whole in January 1999 (in 2008 it was to become guardian.co.uk and in 2013 theguardian.com). By March 2001 GU had over 2.4 million unique users, making it the most popular UK newspaper website (The Guardian Archives, 2002).

In 2005 the new *Berliner Guardian* launched, with a ground-breaking design in a mid-size format. *The Guardian* became the UK's first full-colour national newspaper, and the first UK national newspaper ever to adopt this size. According to Franklin (2008), the contemporary newspaper is incalculably larger than its predecessor of even a decade ago because it has developed an online presence which offers readers an almost endless supply of news and comment, archives and databases. In 2011, *the Guardian's* groundbreaking journalism and innovation were recognized at the Press Awards where it was named Newspaper of the Year for its partnership with Wikileaks, which produced the leaked US embassy cables. In the same year *the Guardian* not only wrote headlines but made headlines with its globally acclaimed investigation into phone hacking (The Guardian Archives, 2002).

Today, *the Guardian* Unlimited is read by 16 million readers (unique users) every month with almost one-third of them in America and has become the most widely read UK newspaper website, attracting nearly 147 million page impressions in March 2007 (Franklin, 2008, p.2).

4.5.2. Saudi Newspapers

A. The Saudi Gazette

The *Saudi Gazette* is one of the largest, and most read newspapers in Saudi Arabia. For more than 30 years, *The Gazette* has been committed to delivering readers the news and information they rely on in a format they enjoy (Saudi Gazette, 2010). The newspaper started in 1978 under the leadership of Dr. Saud Islam. *Saudi Gazette* has appointed a number of editors-in-chief such as Omar Elmershedi and Khaled Almaeena. Khaled Almaeena is a veteran Saudi journalist, commentator, businessman and the editor-in-chief of *the Saudi Gazette* from April 2012 (Alarabyia News, 2014). In 2014, *The Saudi Gazette* newspaper has appointed the country's first female editor-in-chief, Somayya Jabarti, in what has been called a "historic" move in the conservative kingdom (Flanagan, 2014). Somayya Jabarti takes the reins of the English-language newspaper from Khaled Almaeena, who becomes editor-at-large.

According to Almaeena (2013), the team of *Saudi Gazette* entails a group of hard working, professional and committed journalists, editors, translators, and marketers determined to provide readers with the best coverage and analysis of political, economic, social, and socio-cultural issues in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Middle East. *The Saudi Gazette* has been committed to delivering news to its readers through various platforms such as Print, Online, and Social Media Networks, offering them a wide scope of news coverage both in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Internationally (Saudi Gazette, 2013).

B. The Arab News

Arab News is Saudi Arabia's first English-language newspaper. Today, it is one of 29 publications produced by Saudi Research & Publishing Company (SRPC), a subsidiary of Saudi Research & Marketing Group (SRMG). The paper marked its 39th anniversary on Sunday April 20th, 2014. It was on April 20, 1975, when the first issue hit the newspaper stands in Jeddah and elsewhere in Saudi Arabia (Arab News, 2014).

The Arab News was born after the start of the Saudi economic boom in 1973, where there was an influx of expatriates into the Kingdom. They came from many different countries and spoke different languages. But the common language of communication between Saudi nationals and other nationalities was English. At the same time, those expatriates were in great need of following local and international developments and most important, the news about their home countries. So, there was a great need for an English-language newspaper in the Kingdom. As a result, in 1975, Mr. Hisham Ali Hafiz and Mohammed Ali Hafiz came up with the brilliant idea of launching the first English newspaper in Saudi Arabia (Al-Mulhim, 2014).

Hisham and Muhammad Hafiz were the sons of a well-known publisher who has built a respectable Arabic daily which still exists today (Rugh, 2004). The Hafiz brothers' project began with an eight-page tabloid publication with 3,000 copies, each priced at 1 Saudi Riyal. Being a prestigious project dear to the two brothers, they themselves would carry the newspaper loads and sell them to the public, and distribute them to various supermarkets, grocery outlets and corner shops. The initial slow response from sales did not deter them and the brothers started devoting all their time with determination to make the flagship not only viable but also a success. They started hiring Arab and international journalists, photographers, translators, engineers, technicians and cartoonists to manage their editorial, printing and production

departments. Expatriate journalists from the US, England, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Yemen, Pakistan and India were hired to join their Saudi and other Arab counterparts (Hanware, 2014).

According to Hanware (2014), the reasons for the unprecedented success of *Arab News* are two-fold: its consistent adaptability to incorporate changes as the engine of growth and its capability to introduce evolving technologies, and secondly publishing unbiased stories in keeping with the dictum 'News is sacred'. Al-Mulhim (2014) stated that, the most positive impact that *Arab News* has on Saudi society and millions of expatriates is that it promotes open dialogue between citizens and foreigners. The newspaper became the voice of millions of expatriates. It provided a platform for them to express their appreciation and grievances. It helped in the solution of many cases of expatriates and the issues were initiated by writers and readers of *Arab News*. Some of the expatriates were even given the chance of reading part of the newspaper, written in their native language.

Today, with its more than 75,000 copies and hundreds of thousands of online readers, the newspaper has carved out a niche for itself in the publishing world (Hanware, 2014). With such a large distribution and diverse group of readers, *Arab News* is the first choice among executives in local and foreign financial institutions. Because of its wide readership profile, the paper serves as a much sought-after medium for advertising and regional brand building. With the advent and growing popularity of the Internet as a source of information, the daily's website (www.arabnews.com) gets hundreds of thousands of hits every day from Web surfers worldwide. *Arab News*

provides a Saudi perspective in English on a wide range of national, regional and global issues through its diverse collection of columnists (Arab News, 2014).

4.6. The Status of English in Saudi Arabia

Despite the fact that the definite date of the introduction of English as a foreign language is not known, it can be claimed that it was adopted in a disciplined manner with the establishment of General Directorate of Education in 1924 (AL-Shabbi, 1989). Today, English is the only foreign language officially taught in Saudi public schools at all levels of education including colleges and universities. According to AlAbed AlHaq and Smadi (1996), the recent mammoth invasion of English in Saudi society has resulted in the establishment of English departments in most universities and colleges throughout Saudi Arabia. Most of these universities have language centers and translation institutions. The purpose of these departments is to graduate qualified manpower needed for teaching, translation, proselytizing, and for various government jobs that demand proficiency in English.

The use of the English language in Saudi society is not limited to the educational sector, it also extends to other domains such as Media and Business. There are three daily newspapers that are published in English since 1970s: *Arab News*, *Saudi Gazette*, and *Riyadh Daily*. An English television channel began broadcasting in 1982. English is also the language of communication among the members of the staff in large business companies such as Aramco, Dallah, and Saudi Airlines.

Today, English is widely spoken by educated Saudis, including military officers, and merchants. Since 1970s, "English has become the lingua franca of business,

aviation, medicine, transportation, and communications" (Janin and Besheer, 1993, p.95). It has become the language of science, technology, and academic world and it is spoken almost everywhere in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Drake, 2010).

Summary of the chapter

This chapter focused on the design of the present research, presented the goals, discussed the data, methodology, and the methods used. 320 newspaper columns selected from four major British and Saudi newspapers were analyzed linguistically with the help of computational analysis programs. The main text analysis software used in analyzing the data of the study was Anthony's AntConc software. The Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) was also used as a supplement analysis tool in searching for metadiscourse markers in British and Saudi column writing. A large part of the chapter was dedicated to account for the description of Hyland's model of metadiscourse 2005, which was adopted in the study. The final section of the chapter presented a short historical overview of the four newspapers (*The Times* and *The Guardian*) and (*The Saudi Gazette* and *The Arab News*) used in the study. The chapter ended with an overview of the status of the English language in Saudi Arabia.

The next chapter will present the results associated with gender investigation of metadiscourse use in the genre of opinion columns in British and Saudi press. It will also include the normalized totals and the statistical findings of metadiscourse use in the writings of both genders in both corpora: British and Saudi.

V. Chapter Five

Results & Findings

GENDER VARIATION IN THE USE OF METADISCOURSE

5.0. Introduction

The previous chapter covered the methodology and the methods of analysis used in the current study. This chapter presents the findings of the various investigations undertaken in the use of metadiscourse devices by both genders among British and Saudi columnists in newspaper opinion columns.

One of the main purposes of the current study was to investigate whether male and female writers utilize metadiscoursal resources differently or similarly in the genre of opinion columns. To fulfill this purpose, the whole corpus was analyzed and searched electronically for more than 300 metadiscourse devices (see appendix **A** for a complete list from Hyland 2005). AntConc concordancing software (Anthony, 2011) was used to find the frequency of the metadiscourse devices in the corpus. In addition to the electronic analysis, the researcher also relied on the manual analysis of these devices. All the tokens of metadiscourse markers were carefully analyzed individually to ensure their validity. While the software provides the researcher with an accurate frequency of each metadiscourse device, human interpretation and judgment are invaluable in order to determine the correctness and appropriateness of these devices in the contexts of use.

The results presented in this chapter are based on the quantitative analysis of 320 opinion columns from two contrastive corpora: British and Saudi. Drawing on Hyland (2005) model of metadiscourse, the study has identified which metadiscourse categories predominate in this type of newspaper discourse and how they are distributed according cross-linguistic preferences. The chapter begins by providing an overview of the general findings and the overall percentage of use of the metadiscourse macro-categories by both groups of writers: British and Saudi. It then presents a detailed account of the quantitative results and the distribution of the use of all micro-categories of metadiscourse in British

and Saudi opinion texts. The chapter ends with a list of the most important findings regarding gender differences and the use of metadiscourse devices in British and Saudi opinion columns.

5.1. Results

- *Distribution of Metadiscourse Resources in Opinion Columns of Male and Female British and Saudi Writers*

On a general level, the quantitative analysis of the selected opinion columns reveals that metadiscourse resources are present in the entire corpus. However, the presence of these markers is different in both corpora. As seen in Table (11) and Figures (2&3), British writers have made a more frequent use of interactional resources as compared to interactive resources. On the contrary, Saudi writers have made a more frequent use of interactive resources as compared to interactional resources.

Table 11. *Overall Frequency of Metadiscourse Resources in British and Saudi Corpora*

Metadiscourse Resources	***British Columnists***				***Saudi Columnists***			
	Male	***F Per 1000 Words***	***Female***	***F Per 1000 Words***	***Male***	***F Per 1000 Words***	***Female***	***F Per 1000 Words***
Interactive Resources	4353 (5.36%)	53.602	3982 (5.41%)	54.129	3753 (6.50%)	65.071	3875 (6.31%)	63.187
Interactional Resources	5033 (6.07%)	61.975	5861 (8%)	79.672	3600 (6.24%)	62.418	3397 (5.53%)	55.393
Total	**9386**	**115.578**	**9843**	**133.801**	**7353**	**127.490**	**7272**	**118.581**
Percentage	**48.81%**		**51.18%**		**50.27%**		**49.72%**	

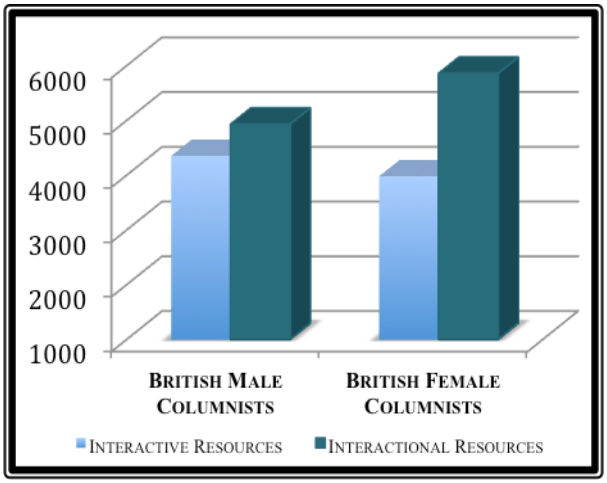


Figure 2. Distribution of Metadiscourse Resources in British Corpus

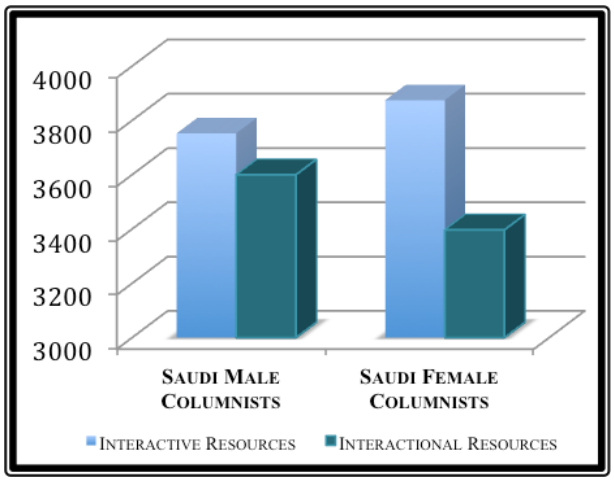


Figure 3. Distribution of Metadiscourse Resources in Saudi Corpus

In order to test the differences between British and Saudi use of metadiscourse resources, the Chi-Square test was applied. In Table (12), the value of Chi-Square (x^2 = 331.499) is meaningful at α level (α = 0.05) with a degree of freedom of 3. This indicates that there is a significant difference between British and Saudi in their overall frequency use of metadiscourse resources.

Table 12. ***Results of Chi-test of British and Saudi Columnists' Use of MD Resources***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	3	331.499	1.511	$X^2 < 7.82$
N of Valid Cases	33754			

Level of Significance = 7.82

5.1.1. Interactive Resources

320 opinion columns of British and Saudi writers of both genders were analyzed in order to characterize potential gender differences between the two groups of columnists in terms of interactive metadiscourse resources. The quantitative analysis of

these opinion columns and the frequency of interactive metadiscourse resources were carried out with Anthony's AntConc software. In addition, the frequency and the distribution of interactive metadiscourse resources were done with Excel software and manually as well. The quantitative analysis of the entire corpus reveals that interactive metadiscourse resources are present in British and Saudi articles, but there are some variations in the distribution of these markers. Five main categories of interactive metadiscourse resources were investigated in both corpora: *Transitions, Frame markers, Endophoric markers, Evidentials,* and *Code glosses*, as summarized in Table (13) and displayed in Fig. (4).

Table 13. *Frequency of Interactive Resources in British and Saudi Corpora*

Interactive Resources	**British Columnists**				**Saudi Columnists**			
	Male	***F Per 1000 Words***	***Female***	***F Per 1000 Words***	***Male***	***F Per 1000 Words***	***Female***	***F Per 1000 Words***
Transition Markers	3502 (80.45%)	43.123	3209 (80.58%)	43.621	2964 (79%)	51.391	3137 (81%)	51.153
Frame Markers	505 (11.60%)	6.218	441 (11.07%)	5.994	249 (6.63%)	4. 317	263 (6.78%)	4.288
Endophoric markers	18 (0.41%)	0.221	8 (0.20%)	0.108	22 (0.58%)	0.381	8 (0.20%)	0.130
Evidential Markers	139 (3.19%)	1.711	126 (3.16%)	1.712	90 (2.39%)	1.560	48 (1.22%)	0.782
Code Glosses	189 (4.34%)	2.327	198 (5%)	2.691	428 (11.40%)	7.420	419 (11%)	6.832
Total	**4353**	**53.602**	**3982**	**54.129**	**3753**	**65.071**	**3875**	**63.187**
Percentage	**52.22%**		**47.77%**		**49.20%**		**50.79%**	

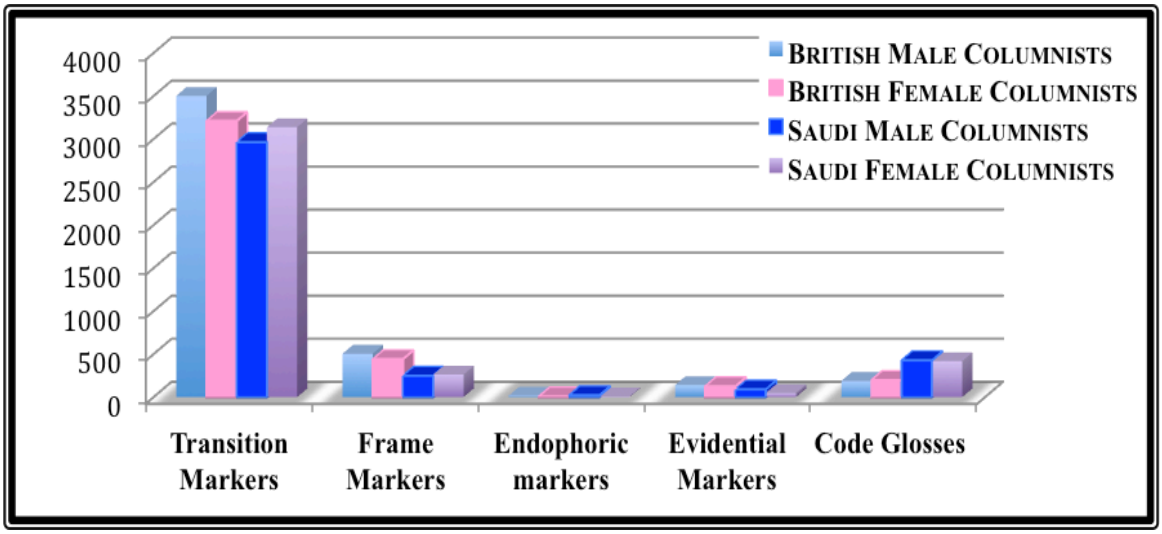


Figure 4. Overall Distribution of Interactive Metadiscourse Resources in the Corpus

A Chi-Square test was run to determine if male and female columnists had used a different type and number of metadiscourse markers in their opinion texts in both groups. The obtained results (Table14) revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between male and female in their overall use of interactive metadiscourse markers, $X^2 = 363.586 < 18.549$.

Table 14. ***Results of Chi-test of British and Saudi Columnists' Use of Interactive MD***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	12	363.586	1.901	$X^2 < 18.549$
N of Valid Cases	15963			

Level of Significance = 18.549

Results also revealed that 'Transition markers' were the most frequent interactive metadiscourse, whereas 'Endophoric markers' represent the least frequent interactive metadiscourse in both groups of writers. The following sections present a detailed analysis of the five main categories of interactive metadiscourse resources in the corpus of both columnists.

A. Transition Markers

- British Columnists

Transition makers are devices that aid comprehension, provide a link between sentences and paragraphs, and help to guide the reader through the text. They are mainly conjunctions, conjunctives, and adverbial phrases. They also indicate additive, resultive, and contrastive relations between ideas. The quantitative analysis reveals that British male columnists used a higher number of transition markers than British female columnists, as shown in Table (15). More specifically, the total frequency of transition markers in the British corpus for male columnists was **3502**, while it was **3209** for female columnists. The normalized results unveiled that both male and female columnists were using an identical number of transitions in their texts: males= 43.123 *per 1000 words* and females=43.621 *per 1000 words*. The conjunction 'And' is the most frequent transition marker in the corpus. It was used **2107** times by male columnists, and **1841** by female columnists. Other transition markers such as *but*, *so*, and *because* also show high frequency in British opinion columns. As it can be seen from Table (15), male British writers used these devices **545**, **205**, **88** times respectively. Whereas female writers used these devices **506**, **220**, **154** times in their articles. In addition, other transition markers were totally missing from the British corpus such as *accordingly, additionally, as a consequence, by the same token,* and *in the same way.* The following table and chart show the frequency and the distribution of transition markers in the corpus of British columnists:

Table 15. *Frequency of Transition Markers in the Opinion Columns of Male and Female British Writers*

Transition Markers	***Type***	***British Male Columnists***	***Percentage***	***British Female Columnists***	***Percentage***
Again	Addition	38	1.08%	16	0.49%
Also		69	2%	60	1.86%
And		2107	60%	1841	57.36%
Besides		1	0.02%	2	0.06%
Further		17	0.48%	8	0.24%
Moreover		1	0.02%	0	0.00%
In addition		1	0.02%	1	0.03%
		2234	**63.79%**	**1928**	**60.08%**
Therefore	Causation	9	0.25%	8	0.24%
Thus		12	0.34%	11	0.34%
Because		88	2.51%	154	4.80%
So		205	5.85%	220	6.85%
So as to		4	0.11%	0	0.00%
		318	**9.08%**	**393**	**12.24%**
But	Limitation / Contradiction	545	15.56%	506	15.76%
Yet		68	2%	54	1.68%
Even though		0	0.00%	10	0.31%
Though		44	1.25%	24	0.74%
While		58	1.65%	69	2.15%
However		23	0.65%	15	0.46%
Whereas		2	0.05%	7	0.21%
Still		75	2.14%	72	2.24%
Rather		40	1.14%	45	1.40%
Nevertheless		1	0.02%	0	0.00%
Nonetheless		2	0.05%	4	0.12%
Although		11	0.31%	20	0.62%
		869	**24.81%**	**826**	**25.74%**
At the same time	Time/sequence	4	0.11%	1	0.03%
Since		45	1.28%	34	1.05%
		49	**1.39%**	**35**	**1.09%**
Leads to /lead to	Consequence	5	0.14%	5	0.15%
As a result		5	0.14%	2	0.06%
Accordingly		0	0.00%	2	0.06%
The result is		2	0.05%	0	0.00%
Hence		2	0.05%	4	0.12%
In the same way		1	0.02%	0	0.00%
		15	**0.42%**	**13**	**0.40%**
By contrast	Comparison	3	0.00%	2	0.06%
On the contrary		1	0.02%	0	0.00%
On the other hand		1	0.02%	2	0.06%
Similarly		4	0.11%	3	0.09%
Likewise		0	0.00%	2	0.06%
Equally		7	0.19%	4	0.12%
Alternatively		1	0.02%	0	0.00%
Conversely		0	0.00%	1	0.03%
	Total	**17**	**0.48%**	**14**	**0.43%**
Total		**3502**	**52.18%**	**3209**	**47.81%**
Frequency Per 1000 Words		43.123		43.621	

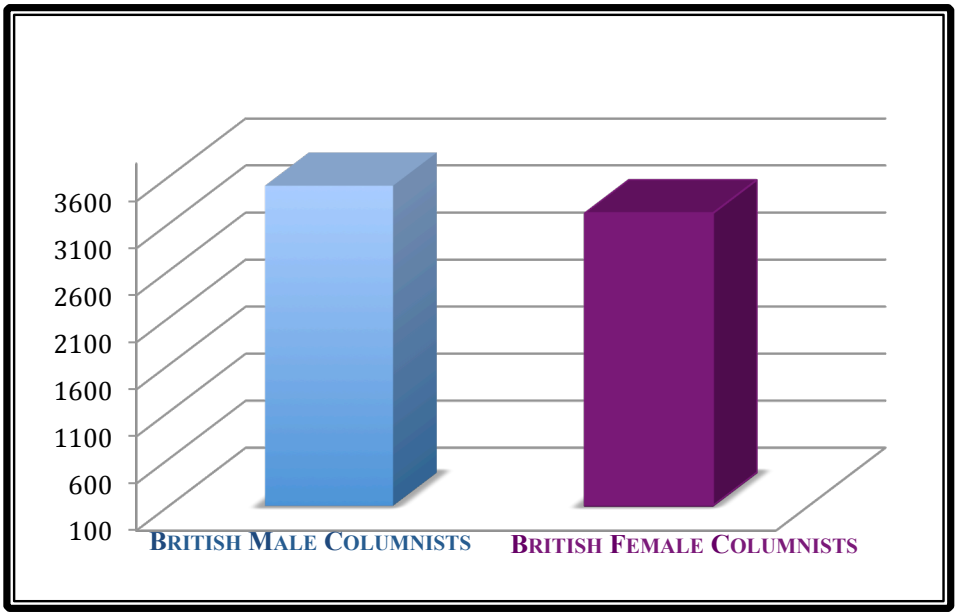


Figure 5. Distribution of Transition Markers in British Opinion Columns

Regarding the transition marker subcategories, 'additive markers' were the most frequent transition markers used similarly by both male and female writers in their columns as can be seen in Table (16). Interestingly, 'contradiction' and 'causation markers' stood second also by both genders. These results suggest that there is no considerable difference between male and female writers. The remaining categories show a low frequency as can be shown from the following table and chart which display the frequency of different types of transition markers in British corpus:

Table 16. *Frequency of Types of Transition Markers in Opinion Columns of Male and Female British Writers*

Type of Transition Markers	*British Male columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*	*British Female Columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*
Addition	2234	63.79%	27.509	1928	60.08%	26.208
Causation	318	9.08%	3.915	393	12.24%	5.342
Contradiction	869	24.81%	10.700	826	25.74%	11.228
Time/Sequence	49	1.39%	0.603	35	1.09%	0.475
Consequence	15	0.42%	0.184	13	0.40%	0.176
Comparison	17	0.48%	0.209	14	0.43%	0.190
Total	**3502**	**52.18%**	43.123	**3209**	**47.81%**	43.621

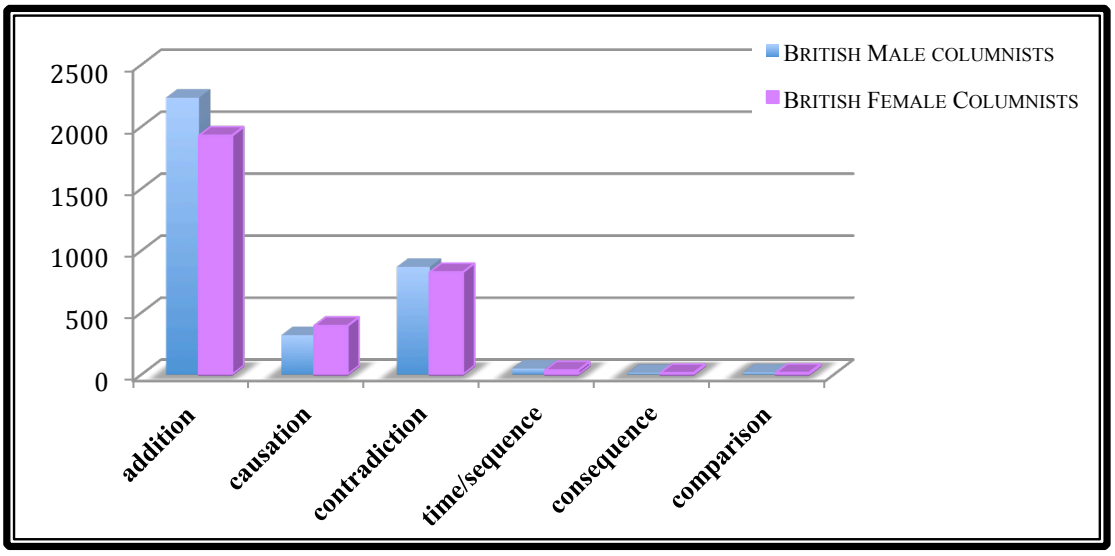


Figure 6. Frequency of Types of Transition Markers in British Opinion Columns

A Chi-Square test was run to see if there is any significant difference between male and female columnist regarding the use of transition markers. Statistical results, as shown in Table (17), revealed that the value of chi-square ($X^2 = 0.010$) is not significant at α level ($\alpha = 0.05$) with a degree of freedom of 1 (DF=1). This shows that there is no difference between male and female British writers in the use of transitions and both display a close similarity in employing these connective devices.

Table 17. ***Results of Chi-test of British and Saudi Columnists' Use of Transitions***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	1	0.010	2.181	**$X^2 > 3.84$**
N of Valid Cases	12812			

- Saudi Columnists

The use of transition markers is also highly evident in the corpus of Saudi columnists. Interestingly, the quantitative analysis shows that Saudi male and female columnist used a similar number of transition devices in the corpus. Specifically, male columnists used **2964** transition makers, whereas female columnists used **3173** markers. Saudi male columnists employed **48.58%** transition markers. Similarly, Saudi female columnists used a similar account of transition markers with **51.41%**markers in the texts. The normalized results showed that male and female Saudi columnists used almost an identical number tokens of transitions: males=51.582 *per 1000 words* and females=51.186 *per 1000 words*. According to Table (18), the conjunction 'And', as in the British corpus, is the most frequent transition marker in Saudi opinion texts. It was used **2018** times by male columnists, and **2135** by female columnists. Other transition markers such as *but*, *also*, *because,* and *so* also show high frequency in Saudi opinion columns as summarized in Table (18). In addition, the analysis of transition markers reveals a frequent use of other markers such as *while*, *however*, *yet*, *since*, *still*, and *rather* by both genders of Saudi writers. Other transition markers such as *accordingly, alternatively, as a consequence, by the same token,* and *conversely* were totally missing in the articles analyzed.

Table 18. *Frequency of Transition Markers in the Opinion Columns of Male and Female Saudi Writers*

Transition Markers	*Type*	*Saudi Male Columnists*	*Percentage*	*Saudi Female Columnists*	*Percentage*
Again	Addition	20	0.67%	15	0.47%
Also		121	4.08%	113	3.60%
And		2018	68.08%	2135	3.48%
Besides		1	0.03%	3	68.05%
Further		6	0.20%	18	0.57%
Moreover		4	0.13%	9	0.28%
In addition		24	0.80%	7	0.22%
Furthermore		8	0.26%	2	0.06%
Additionally		3	0.10%	0	0.00%
	Total	**2205**	**74.39%**	**2302**	**73.38%**
Therefore	Causation	18	0.60%	9	0.28%
Thereby		1	0.03%	1	0.03%
Thus		15	0.50%	2	0.06%
Because		77	2.59%	96	3.09%
So		123	4.14%	134	4.27%
So as to		3	0.10%	1	0.03%
	Total	**237**	**8%**	**243**	**7.74%**
But	Limitation / Contradiction	231	7.80%	289	9.21%
Yet		14	0.47%	30	0.95%
Even though		9	0.30%	7	0.22%
Though		6	0.20%	5	0.15%
While		64	2.15%	39	1.24%
However		43	1.45%	47	1.49%
Whereas		1	0.03%	3	0.09%
Still		35	1.18%	45	1.43%
Rather		17	0.52%	34	1.08%
Nevertheless		2	0.06%	4	0.12%
Nonetheless		0	0.00%	2	0.06%
Although		19	0.64%	16	0.51%
	Total	**441**	**14.87%**	**521**	**16.60%**
At the same time	Time/sequence	**11**	**0.37%**	**2**	**0.06%**
Since	Consequence	33	1.11%	25	0.79%
Leads to /lead to		12	0.40%	11	0.35%
As a result		10	0.33%	12	0.38%
Consequently		2	0.06%	1	0.03%
Accordingly		2	0.06%	0	0.00%
Result in		0	0.00%	4	0.12%
Hence		3	0.10%	1	0.03%
In the same way		0	0.00%	1	0.03%
	Total	**62**	**2.09%**	**55**	**1.75%**
In contrast	Comparison	1	0.03%	0	0.00%
By contrast		0	0.00%	1	0.03%
On the contrary		0	0.00%	4	0.12%
On the other hand		4	0.13%	5	0.15%
Similarly		2	0.06%	1	0.03%
Equally		1	0.03%	3	0.09%
	Total	**8**	**0.26%**	**14**	**0.44%**
Total		**2964**	**48.58%**	**3137**	**51.41%**
Frequency Per 1000 Words		51.582		51.186	

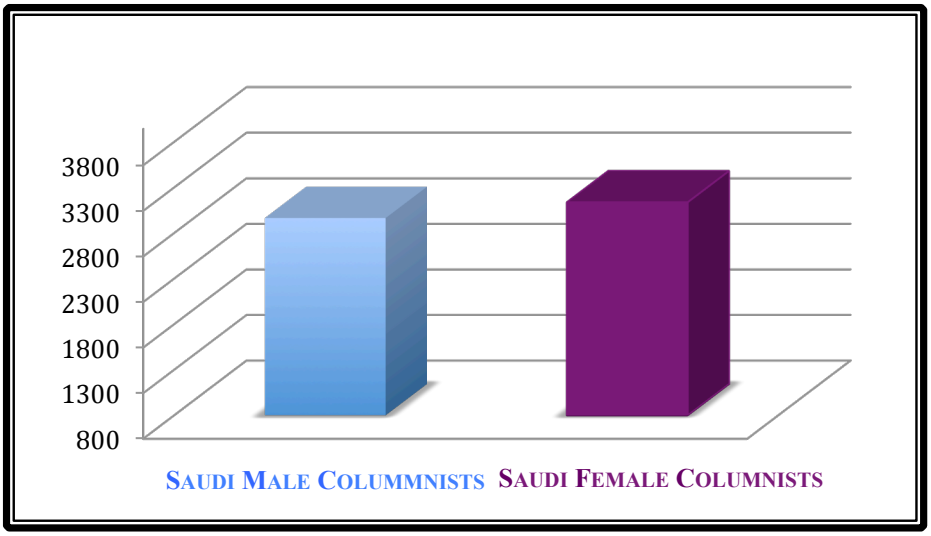


Figure 7. Distribution of Transition Markers in Saudi Opinion Columns

Regarding the different subcategories of transition markers, findings reveal that additive markers were the most frequently used category in both male and female Saudi writers: (Male=2205) and (Female= 2302). 'Contradiction' and 'causation markers' came second among both writers. The remaining categories (i.e. comparison markers, consequence markers and sequence markers) displayed a low frequency of occurrence in the columns surveyed. Again, these findings suggest that there is no considerable difference between male and female writers in their use of transition markers. The following table and chart display the frequency of types of transition markers in the opinion columns of male and female Saudi writers:

Table 19. *Frequency of Types of Transition Markers in the Columns of Male and Female Saudi Writers*

Type of Transition Markers	*Saudi Male columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*	*Saudi Female Columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*
Addition	2205	74.39%	38.231	2302	73.38%	37.537
Causation	237	8%	4.109	243	7.74%	3.962
Contradiction	441	14.87%	7.646	521	16.60%	8.495
Time/Sequence	11	0.37%	0.190	2	0.06%	0.032
Consequence	62	2.09%	1.265	55	1.75%	0.929
Comparison	8	0.26%	0.138	14	0.44%	0.228
Total	2964	48.58%	51.582	3137	51.41%	51.186

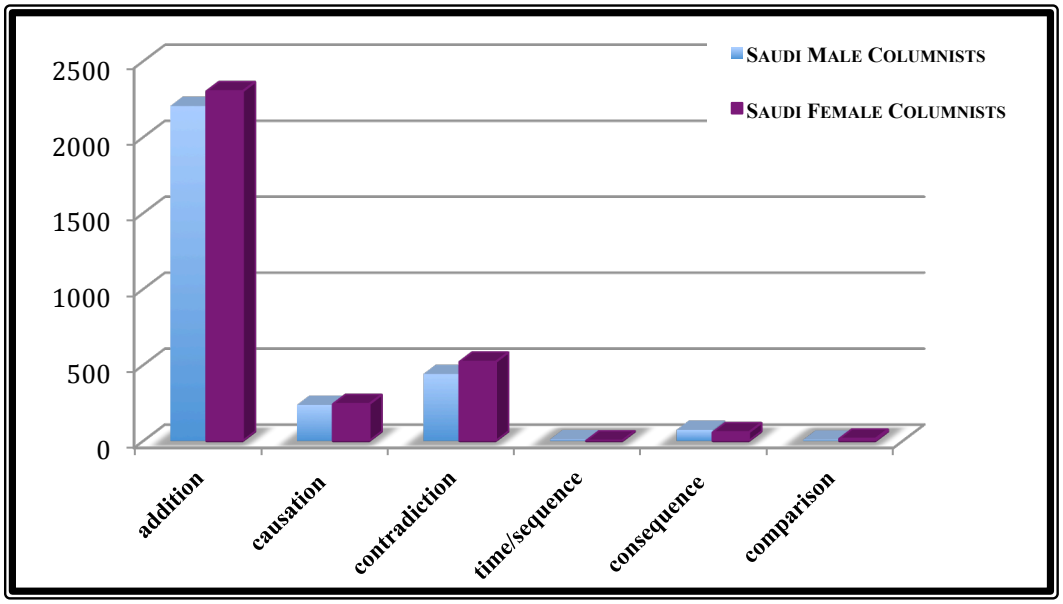


Figure 8. Frequency of Types of Transition Markers in Saudi Opinion Columns

The frequencies of transition markers were also tested statistically for any significant difference. After applying the chi-square test at α=0.05 with 1 degree of freedom (DF=1), results showed that the difference between writers in the use of transitions is considered to be not statistically significant as displayed in Table (20).

Table 20.

Results of Chi-test of Male and Female Saudi Columnists' Use of Transitions

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	1	0.410	2.181	**$X^2 > 3.84$**
N of Valid Cases	**6101**			

B. Frame Markers

- British Columnists

'Frame markers' is the second category of interactive metadiscourse resources, which refer to textual devices that allow writers to frame and mark different stages in their texts. Frame markers are typically used to achieve different functions in texts such as: sequencing, labeling stages, announcing goals, and shifting topics. Some commonly used frame markers include *first, next, then, finally, now, in this, for the moment, purpose, to conclude, well ...etc.* The results of the quantitative analysis of frame markers in the British corpus showed that both male and female writers employ similar low frequencies of frame markers in their opinion texts. Male columnists employ these frame markers **505** times, while the female columnists use them **441** times, as Table (21) displayed. This similarity was further confirmed by the normalized results which showed that male writers employ 6.21 frame markers *per 1000 words* and female writers employ 5.994 *per 1000 words*. In addition, the Chi-Square test, which equals 0.953 with 1 degree of freedom, showed that the difference of use of frame markers by both genders is considered to be not statistically significant. It is worth mentioning that 'now' was the most frequent frame marker used by both writers. It was used **161** and **165** respectively. The following table and figure show the frequency of frame markers in the British corpus:

Table 21.

Frequency of Frame Markers in the Opinion Columns of Male and Female British Writers

Frame Markers	*Type*	*British Male Columnists*	*Percentage*	*British Female Columnists*	*Percentage*
Finally	Sequencing	7	1.38%	11	2.49%
First		20	4%	8	1.81%
First of all		0	0.00%	3	0.68%
Last		22	4.35%	1	0.22%
Lastly		0	0.00%	1	0.22%
Next		11	2.17%	5	1.13%
Numbering (1,2,3)		0	0.00%	5	1.13%
Second		7	1.38%	5	1.13%
Subsequently		0	0.00%	1	0.22%
Then		104	20.59%	37	8.39%
Third		3	0.59%	7	1.58%
This article/ this column		1	0.19%	1	0.22%
This week, this year, this month, this weekend		38	7.52%	44	10%
Last week, last year, last month, last summer		61	12.07%	28	6.34%
To start with		4	0.80%	0	0.00%
	Total	**278**	**55.04%**	**157**	**35.60%**
At this point	Labeling Stages	0	0.00%	2	0.45%
In brief		0	0.00%	0	0.00%
In short		0	0.00%	1	0.22%
Now		161	31.88%	165	37.41%
To conclude		1	0.19%	0	0.00%
For the moment		1	0.19%	0	0.00%
By far		1	0.19%	0	0.00%
So far		4	0.80%	1	0.22%
Overall		2	0.39%	0	0.00%
	Total	**170**	**33.66%**	**169**	**38.32%**
Purpose	Announcing Goals	3	0.59%	1	0.22%
Seek to		1	0.19%	1	0.22%
Want to		20	4%	53	12%
Wish to		1	0.19%	2	0.45%
Desire to		0	0.00%	8	1.81%
Intend to		0	0.00%	1	0.22%
Focus		4	0.80%	13	3%
Goal		2	0.39%	0	0.00%
Wish to		1	0.19%	2	0.45%
Would like to		0	0.00%	1	0.22%
Objective		1	0.19%	0	0.00%
Intention		1	0.19%	0	0.00%
Aim		2	0.39%	2	0.45%
In this		3	0.59%	0	0.00%
	Total	**39**	**7.72%**	**84**	**19.04%**
Back to	Shifting Topic	2	0.39%	7	1.58%
Well		13	2.57%	19	4.30%
Return to		3	0.59%	4	90.70%
Resume		0	0.00%	1	0.22%
	Total	**18**	**3.56%**	**31**	**7.02%**
Total		**505**	**53.38%**	**441**	**46.61%**
Frequency Per 1000 Words		6.21		5.994	

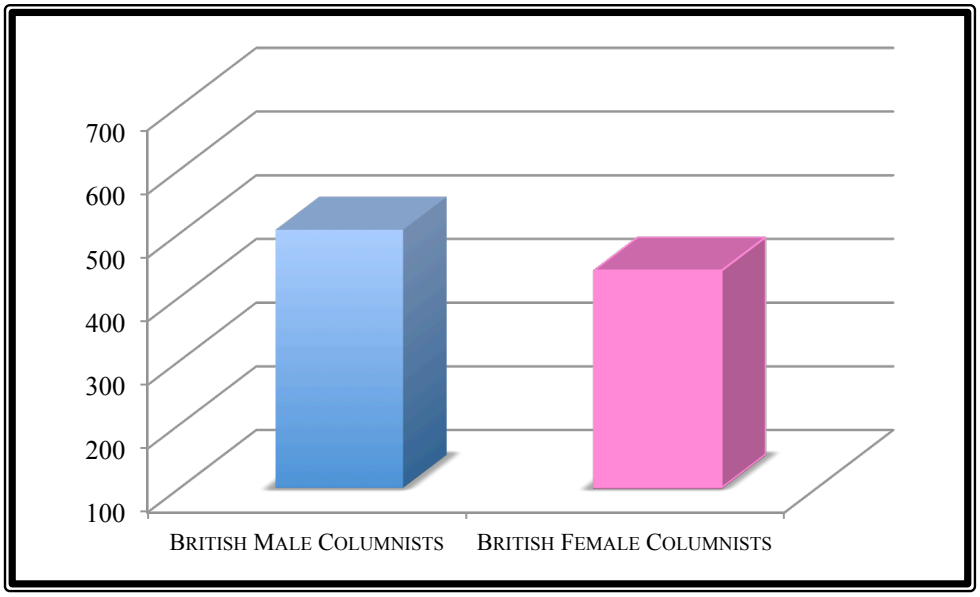


Figure 9. Distribution of Frame Markers in British Opinion Columns

A detailed look into the subcategories of frame markers reveals some interesting differences among the British male and female writers. The analysis showed that male writers used devices to achieve sequencing more frequently than female writers did. It revealed that sequencers were very numerous in the male texts, with **278** instances versus **157** in the female texts. It was also found that there is a balanced number of frame makers used to label stages in the texts of the male and female writers. However, female writers had higher frequency of use of frame markers to announce goals and shift topics. They were used **84** and **31** times, respectively. The following table and figure display the frequency of the functions of frame markers in the British texts:

Table 22. *Frequency of Types of Frame Markers in the Opinion Columns of Male and Female British Writers*

Type of Frame Markers	*British Male Columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*	*British Female Columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*
Sequencing	278	55.04%	3.423	157	35.60%	2.134
Labeling Stages	170	33.66%	2.093	169	38.32%	2.297
Announcing Goals	39	7.72%	0.480	84	19.04%	1.141
Shifting Topic	18	3.56%	0.221	31	7.02%	0.421
Total	505	53.38%	6.21	441	46.61%	5.994

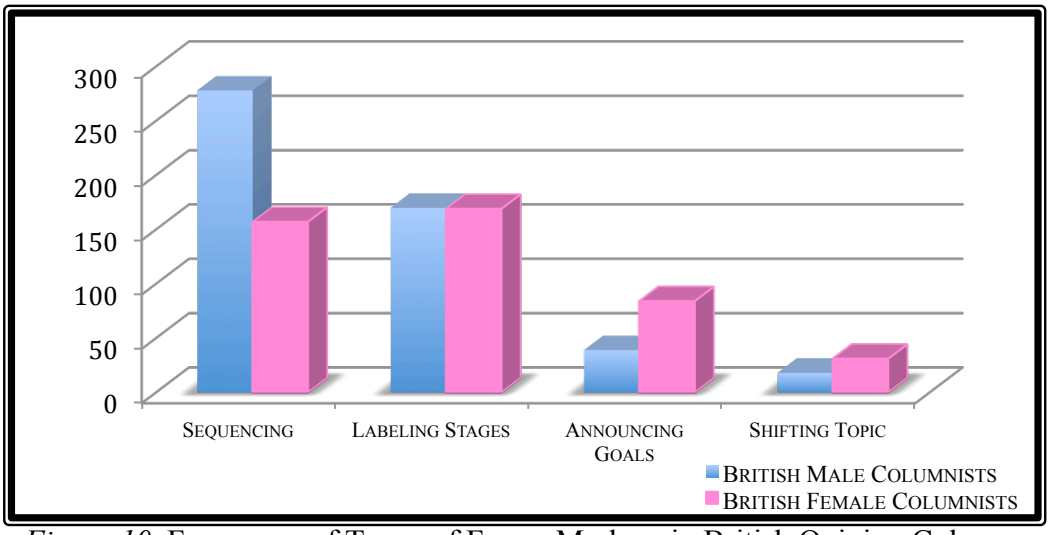


Figure 10. Frequency of Types of Frame Markers in British Opinion Columns

- Saudi Columnists

In regard to frame markers in the Saudi corpus, both male and female Saudi writers used a lower number of frame markers in their articles. As it can be seen in Table (23), the total frequencies of frame markers in the opinion columns of male and female writers were **249** and **263** respectively, with both using a similar number of tokens of frame markers. Such a similar use of frame markers by both writers confirms that there is no significant gender difference between male and female writers' use of frame markers. This was also confirmed by the identical normalized results (4 frame markers *per 1000 words*) in both male and female texts, and the Chi-Square test showed that there was no statistical significant difference between male and female Saudi writers in their use of frame makers. The Chi-Square equals 0.070 at α=0.05 with 1 degree of freedom is not considered to be statistically significant. However, 'then' and 'now' were the most used frame markers by both writers. Several other frame markers such as *last*, *in sum*, *in conclusion*, *digress*, *revisit*, *all in all*, *seek to*, *for the moment*, *to conclude*, *to summarize*…etc., were totally missing from the Saudi opinion columns. The following table and chart display the frequency of frame markers in the Saudi corpus:

Table 23.
Frequency of Frame Markers in the Opinion Columns of Male and Female Saudi Writers

Frame Markers	*Type*	*Saudi Male Columnists*	*Percentage*	*Saudi Female Columnists*	*Percentage*
Finally	Sequencing	6	2.40%	15	5.70%
First		9	3.61%	5	2%
First of all		0	0.00%	1	0.38%
Lastly		1	0.40%	0	0.00%
Last article		4	1.60%	0	0.00%
Next		1	0.40%	2	0.76%
Last article		4	1.60%	0	0.00%
Second		7	2.81%	6	2.28%
Subsequently		1	0.40%	0	0.00%
Then		60	24.09%	65	24.71%
Third		0	0.00%	1	0.38%
This article		1	0.40%	0	0.00%
This week, this year, this month, this weekend		2	0.80%	27	10.26%
Last week, last year, last month, last summer		16	6.42%	25	9.50%
To begin		0	0.00%	1	0.38%
To start with		0	0.00%	1	0.38%
	Total	**112**	**45%**	**149**	**56.65%**
At this stage	Labeling Stages	1	0.40%	0	0.00%
In short		0	0.00%	1	0.38%
Now		52	20.88%	51	19.39%
By far		1	0.40%	0	0.00%
So far		1	0.40%	3	1.14%
Overall		5	2%	2	0.76%
On the whole		0	0.00%	2	0.76%
	Total	**60**	**24.09%**	**59**	**22.43%**
Purpose	Announcing Goals	3	1.20%	1	0.38%
Want to		13	5.22%	21	8%
Wish to		2	0.80%	9	3.42%
Intend to		1	0.40%	0	0.00%
Focus		8	3.21%	4	1.52%
Goal		8	3.21%	3	1.14%
Objective		2	0.80%	1	0.38%
Aim		1	0.40%	1	0.38%
Wish to		2	0.80%	9	3.42%
Would like to		9	3.61%	1	0.38%
In this		2	0.80%	0	0.00%
	Total	**51**	**20.48%**	**50**	**19%**
Back to	Shifting Topic	8	3.21%	4	1.52%
Well		9	3.61%	1	0.38%
With regard to		7	2.81%	0	0.00%
Turn to		2	0.80%	0	0.00%
	Total	**26**	**10.44%**	**5**	**2%**
Total		**249**	**48.63%**	**263**	**51.36%**
Frequency Per 1000 Words		**4. 317**		**4.288**	

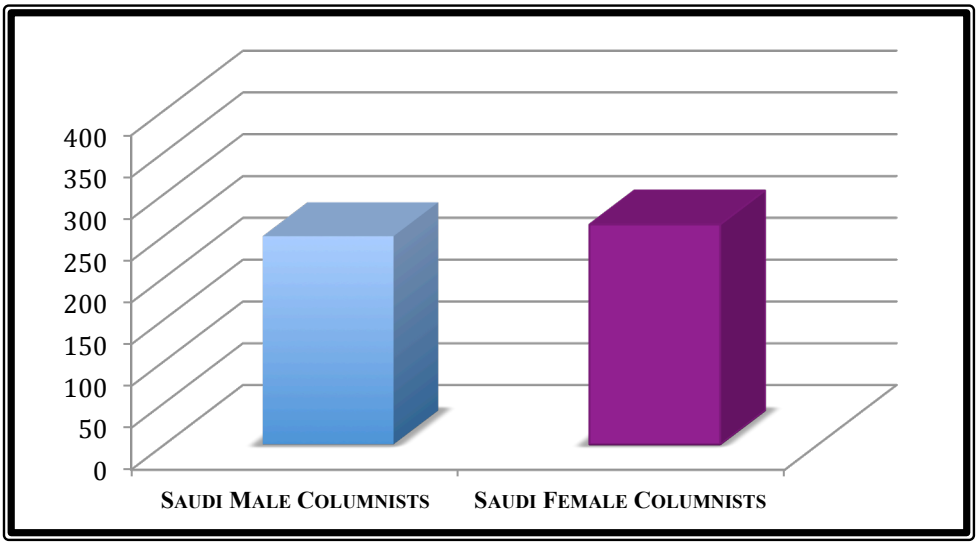


Figure 11. Distribution of Frame Markers in Saudi Opinion Columns

A closer analysis of the subcategories of frame markers indicated that sequencers were the most frequent markers used by Saudi writers in their texts. As Table (24) displays, female writers had a higher frequency of use of frame markers to achieve sequencing (149 instances) than male writers (112 instances). Both writers used a balanced number of frame markers to label stages and announce goals in their texts. They also used a low frequency of markers to shift topics in their articles. The following table and figure display the frequency of the functions of frame markers in the Saudi texts:

Table 24. *Frequency of Types of Frame Markers in the Opinion Columns of Male and Female Saudi Writers*

Type of Frame Markers	*Saudi Male Columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*	*Saudi Female Columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*
Sequencing	112	45%	1.941	149	56.65%	2.429
Labeling Stages	60	24.09%	1.040	59	22.43%	0.962
Announcing Goals	51	20.48%	0.88	50	19%	0.815
Shifting Topic	26	10.44%	0.45	5	2%	0.081
Total	249	**48.63%**	4.317	263	**51.36%**	4.288

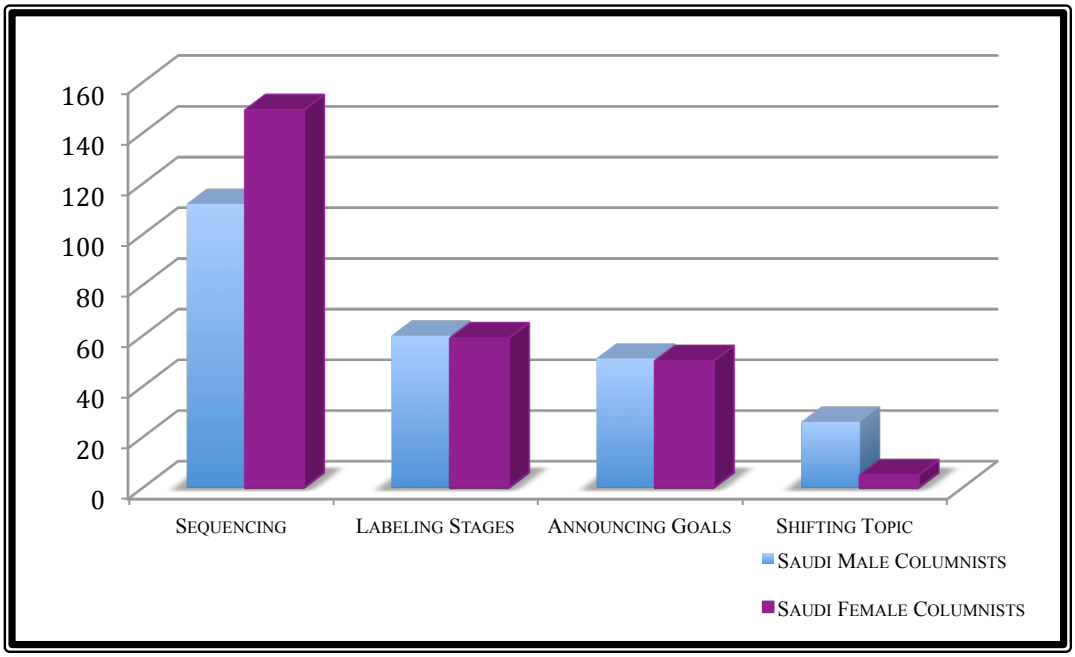


Figure 12. Frequency of Types of Frame Markers in Saudi Opinion Columns

C. Endophoric Markers

- British Columnists

The third category of interactive resources includes endophoric markers. Endophoric markers are often used to refer readers to other parts of the text in order to make any additional material salient and available to the readers. Examples of endophoric markers include *see table, as noted above, see below, see page x, figure x, this section, this part*…etc. The use of endophoric markers is very rare in the corpus of the study. Both British writers used a very low number of these markers in their columns. Reasons for this lower frequency usage of endophoric markers will be discussed in detail in the discussion chapter. As Table (25), displays, male writers tended to use slightly higher frequency of endophoric markers (18 times) than female writers (8 times). To test this difference, a Chi-Square test was run. The test equals 1.418 at α=0.05 with 1 degree of freedom, and this revealed that the difference is considered to be not statistically significant. The most noticeable endophoric marker in the British corpus was the reference to the 'front page' of

the newspaper. The following table and figure show the frequency of occurrence of endophoric markers in the British corpus:

Table 25. *Frequency of Endophoric Markers in the Opinion Columns of Male and Female British Writers*

Endophoric Markers	*British Male Columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*	*British Female Columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*
This column	2	11.11%		1	12.5%	
Front page	8	44.44%		3	37.5%	
Above	1	5.55%		1	12.5%	
Earlier	1	5.55%		1	12.5%	
Later	0	0.00%		0	0.00%	
This article	1	5.55%		1	12.5%	
Leader page	1	5.55%		0	0.00%	
Page x	2	11.11%		1	12.5%	
Article x – Section x	2	11.11%		0	0.00%	
Total	**18**	**69.23%**	**0.219**	**8**	**30.76%**	**0.108**

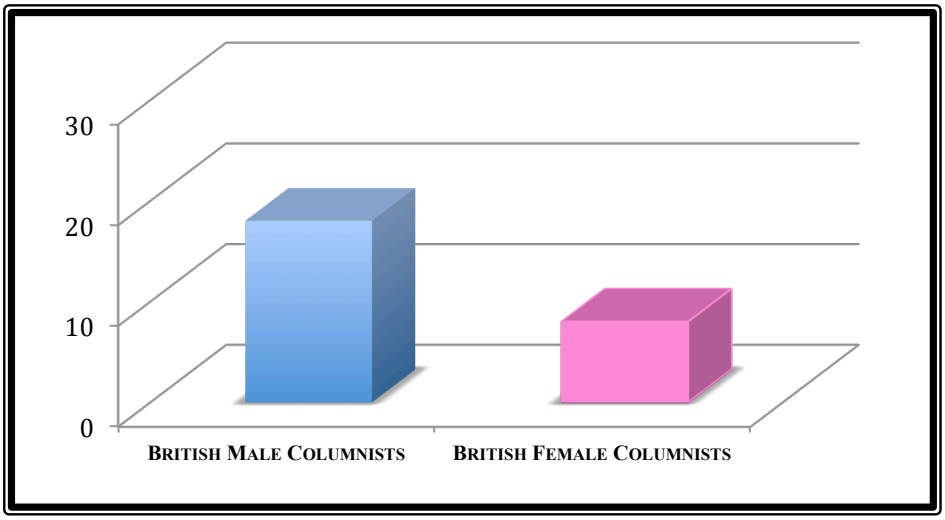


Figure 13. Distribution of Endophoric Markers in British Opinion Columns

- Saudi Columnists

Likewise, Saudi writers also used a lower number of endophoric markers in their articles. Male writers used a slightly higher number of endophoric markers than female writers. There were **22** instances of endophoric markers in male articles and only **8**

instances in female articles. The Chi-Square test, which equals 3.394 at α=0.05 with 1 degree of freedom, showed that this difference is considered to be not quite statistically significant. The following table and chart display the low frequency of endophoric markers in the Saudi corpus:

Table 26. *Frequency of Endophoric Markers in the Opinion Columns of Male and Female Saudi Writers*

Endophoric Markers	***Saudi Male Columnists***	***Percentage***	***F Per 1000 Words***	***Saudi Female Columnists***	***Percentage***	***F Per 1000 Words***
This column	0	0.00%		1	12.5%	
Front page	0	0.00%		3	37.5%	
Above	5	22.72%		0	0.00%	
Earlier	3	13.63%		0	0.00%	
Later	1	4.54%		0	0.00%	
This article	8	36.36%		4	50%	
This Newspaper	2	9.09%		0	0.00%	
Page x	2	9.09%		0	0.00%	
Before	1	4.54%		0	0.00%	
Total	**22**	**73.33%**	**0.381**	**8**	**26.66%**	**0.130**

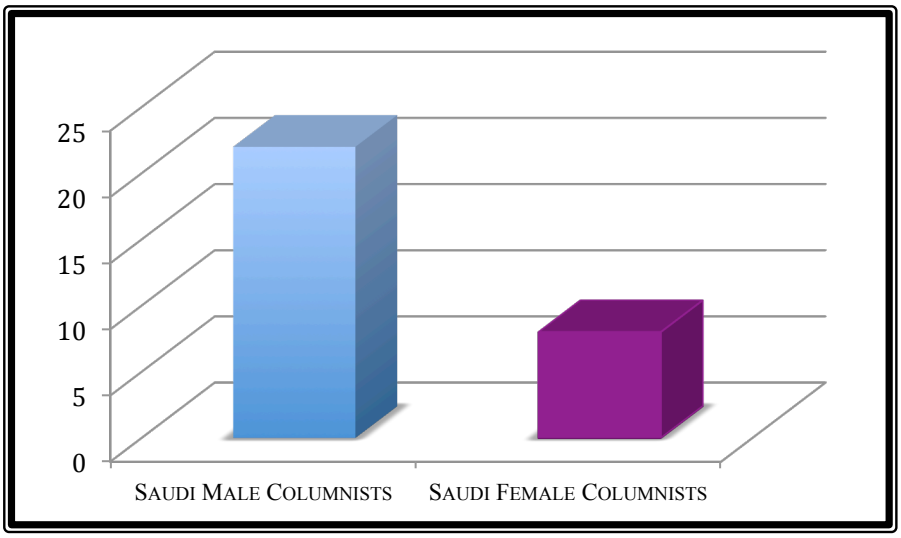


Figure 14. Distribution of Endophoric Markers in Saudi Opinion Columns

D. Evidential Markers

- British Columnists

Evidentials refer to "metalinguistic representations of an idea from another source" (Thomas and Hawes, 1994, p.129). These markers guide the reader's interpretation and establish an authorial command of the subject (Hyland, 2005a). They "indicate the external origin of material in the current text and give credence to that material by drawing attention to the credibility of its source" (Hyland, 2005a, p.96). Evidential markers refer to sources of information from other texts such as quotations and citations. The use of evidentials is quite low in the British corpus with only one token *per 1000 words* and both genders show a similar use of these markers. No significant statistical difference was found with the Chi-Square test which equals 0.060 at α=0.05 with 1 degree of freedom. Table (27), shows the distribution of evidentials in the British articles.

Table 27. *Frequency of Evidential Markers in the Opinion Columns of Male and Female British Writers*

Evidential Markers	*British Male Columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*	*British Female Columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*
According to	21	15.10%	0.258	12	9.52%	0.163
Quotations	97	69.78%	1.194	84	66.66%	1.141
Reference to studies, surveys, reports	21	15.10%	0.258	30	23.80%	0.407
Total	**139**	**52.45%**	**1.711**	**126**	**47.54%**	**1.712**

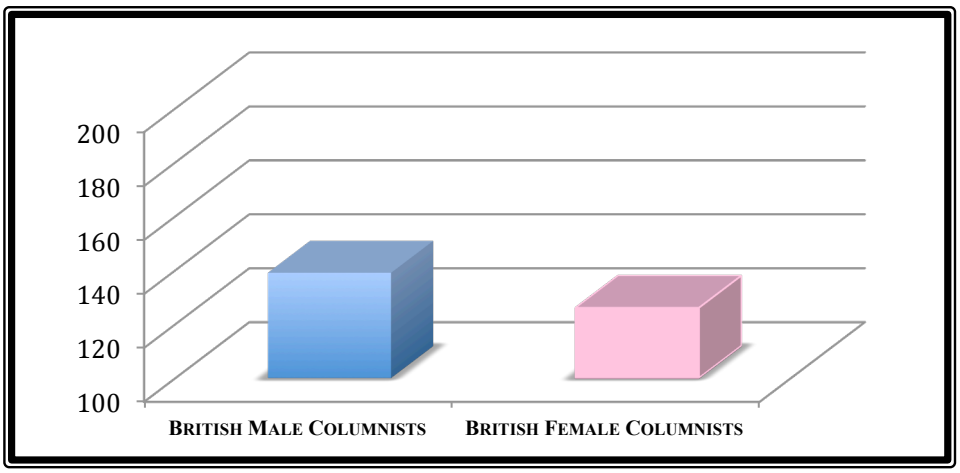


Figure 15. Distribution of Evidential Markers in British Opinion Columns

- Saudi Columnists

The frequency of evidential markers was also low in Saudi texts. Saudi male writers employed slightly higher frequencies of evidentials as compared to female writers. The following table and chart display the distribution of evidential markers in the Saudi articles:

Table 28. *Frequency of Evidential Markers in the Opinion Columns of Male and Female Saudi Writers*

Evidential Markers	*Saudi Male Columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*	*Saudi Female Columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*
According to	14	15.55%	0.242	11	23%	0.179
Quotations	60	66.66%	1.040	18	37.5%	0.293
Reference to studies, surveys, reports	16	17.77%	0.277	19	39.58%	0.309
Total	**90**	**65.21%**	**1.560**	**48**	**34.78%**	**0.782**

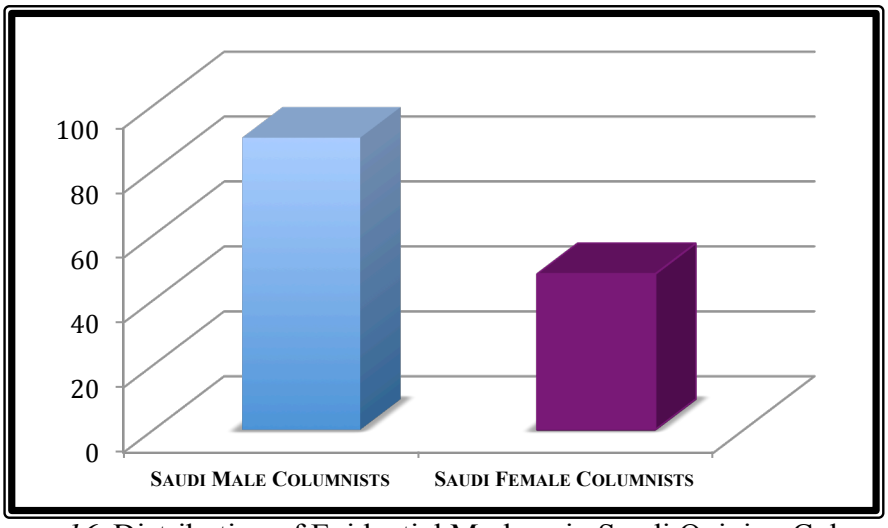


Figure 16. Distribution of Evidential Markers in Saudi Opinion Columns

E. Code Glosses

- British Columnists

Code glosses is the final category of interactive resources carried out in the analysis of the data. Code glosses are devices used to elaborate propositional meanings and assist that

the reader is able to get the writer's intended meaning. Examples of code glosses include: *namely, for example, for instance, in other words, called, defined as, I mean, such as, that is …etc.*

According to Hyland (2007), code glosses "help to contribute to the creation of coherent, reader-friendly prose while conveying the writer's audience-sensitivity and relationship to the message" (p. 266). These elaborations can be classified into two categories according to their function: reformulation and exemplification (Hyland, 2007). Reformulation is "a discourse function whereby the second unit is a restatement or elaboration of the first in different words, to present it from a different point of view and to reinforce the message"(Hyland, 2007, p. 269). Exemplification refers to "a communication process through which meaning is clarified or supported by a second unit which illustrates the first by citing an example" (Hyland, 2007, p. 270). The results of the quantitative analysis regarding code glosses in the British corpus found that male and female writers showed also a similar pattern of use regarding this category. The normalized results confirmed that both genders of writers used an identical low number of code glosses (2 *per 1000 words*). Despite this similarity, both writers show a different use of the subcategories of code glosses. Female writers tended to use more reformulation devices, whereas male writers tended to show a more frequent use of exemplification devices than female writers. No statistical significant difference was found in the use of code glosses among British writers as the Chi-Square test equals 0.508 at α=0.05 with 1 degree of freedom and this indicates no statistical significant difference. The following table and figure demonstrate the frequency of the use of code glosses in the British corpus:

Table 29. *Frequency of Code Glosses in the Opinion Columns of Male and Female British Writers*

Code Glosses	*Type*	*British Male Columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*	*British Female Columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*
Called	Reformulation	16	8.46%		18	9.09%	
Defined as		0	0.00%		1	0.50%	
I mean		8	4.23%		1	0.50%	
In fact		12	6.34%		17	8.58%	
In other words		2	1.05%		2	1.01%	
Put another way		1	0.52%		0	0.00%	
Indeed		17	9%		13	6.56%	
Known as		2	1.05%		2	1.01%	
Namely		0	0.00%		2	1.01%	
Or x		19	10.05%		72	36.36%	
Specifically		2	1.05%		1	0.50%	
That is		36	19.04%		26	13.13%	
That means		3	1.58%		0	0.00%	
Which means		2	1.05%		0	0.00%	
This means		0	0.00%		2	1.01%	
Means		5	2.64%		7	3.53%	
Mean that		3	1.58%		2	1.01%	
	Total	**128**	**67.72%**	**1.576**	**166**	**83.83%**	**2.256**
For example	Exemplification	19	10.05%		3	1.51%	
For instance		1	0.52%		6	3.03%	
Such as		34	18%		16	8.08%	
Say		7	3.70%		7	3.53%	
	Total	**61**	**32.27%**	**0.751**	**32**	**16.16%**	**0.434**
Total		**189**	**48.83%**	**2.327**	**198**	**51.16%**	**2.691**

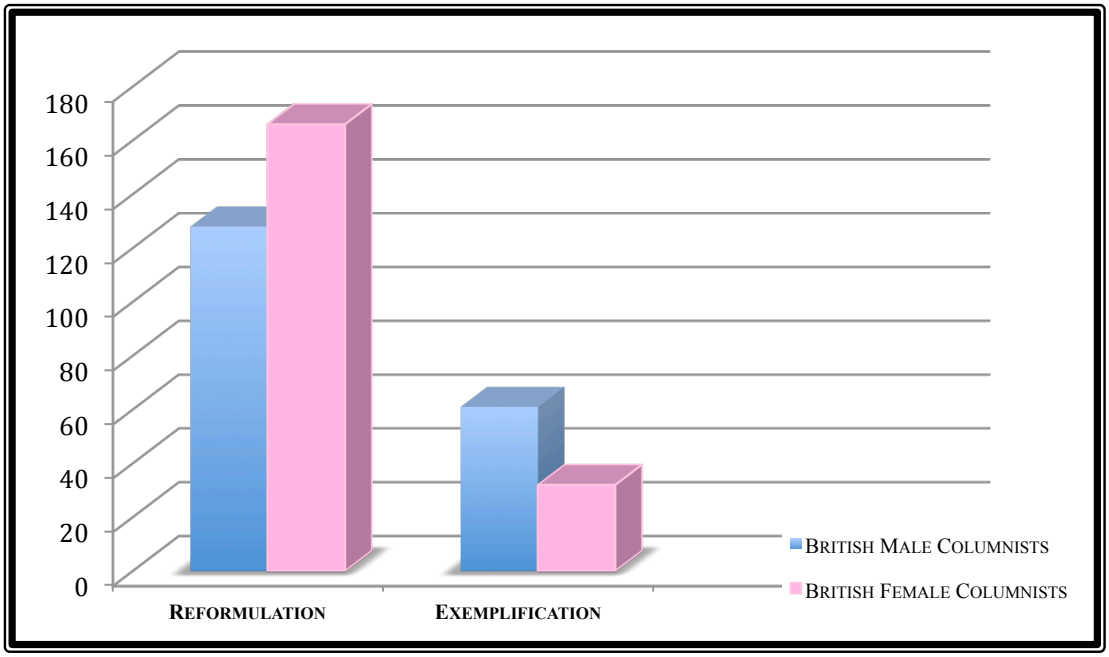


Figure 17. Distribution of Subcategories of Code Glosses in British Opinion Columns

- Saudi Columnists

Saudi columnists both males and females have shown a high ratio in the use of code glosses in the Saudi corpus. This is unsurprising since the main purpose of using code glosses is to facilitate readers' interpretation of the information in the texts. This reflects an awareness of the intended readership who are not native speakers of English. The analysis of the data reveals that Saudi writers have used an equal number of code glosses in their articles. These elaboration devices were used **428** times by male writers and **419** by female writers. The most frequently used code gloss is the reformulation marker *'or x'* which was used **277** and **288** times respectively. In terms of subcategories of code glosses, Saudi writers showed a very similar use and a high frequency of reformulation markers. However, male writers used more exemplification markers than female writers. The normalized results showed that male writers used **7.420** code glosses *per 1000 words*, whereas females used **6.832** *per 1000 words*. These results were tested using Chi-Square test and were found to be not statistically significant. Chi squared was found to equal 0.019 at α=0.05 with 1 degree of freedom, and by conventional criteria of Chi-Square test, this difference is considered to be not statistically significant. The following table and figure demonstrate the frequency of use of code glosses in the Saudi corpus:

Table 30. *Frequency of Code Glosses in the Opinion Columns of Male and Female Saudi Writers*

Code Glosses	*Types*	*Saudi Male Columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*	*Saudi Female Columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*
As a matter of fact	Reformulation	5	1.16%		0	0.00%	
Called		9	2.10%		3	0.71%	
I mean		1	0.23%		2	0.47%	
i.e.		4	0.93%		0	0.00%	
In fact		11	2.57%		7	1.67%	
In other words		8	1.86%		9	2.14%	
Indeed		8	1.86%		9	2.14%	
Known as		4	0.93%		2	0.47%	
Namely		2	0.46%		2	0.47%	
Or x		277	64.71%		288	68.73%	
Specifically		3	0.70%		0	0.00%	
That is		35	8.17%		56	13.36%	
That means		1	0.23%		1	0.23%	
Which means		1	0.23%		0	0.00%	
This means		6	1.40%		2	0.47%	
Means		7	1.63%		7	1.67%	
Mean that		0	0.00%		1	0.23%	
Viz		1	0.23%		0	0.00%	
	Total	**383**	**89.48%**	**6.640**	**389**	**92.84**	**6.343**
For example	Exemplification	11	2.57%		9	2.14%	
For instance		4	0.93%		3	0.71%	
Such as		23	5.37%		18	4.29%	
Say		7	1.63%		0	0.00%	
	Total	**45**	**10.51%**	**0.780**	**30**	**7.15%**	**0.489**
Total		**428**	**50.53%**	**7.420**	**419**	**49.46%**	**6.832**

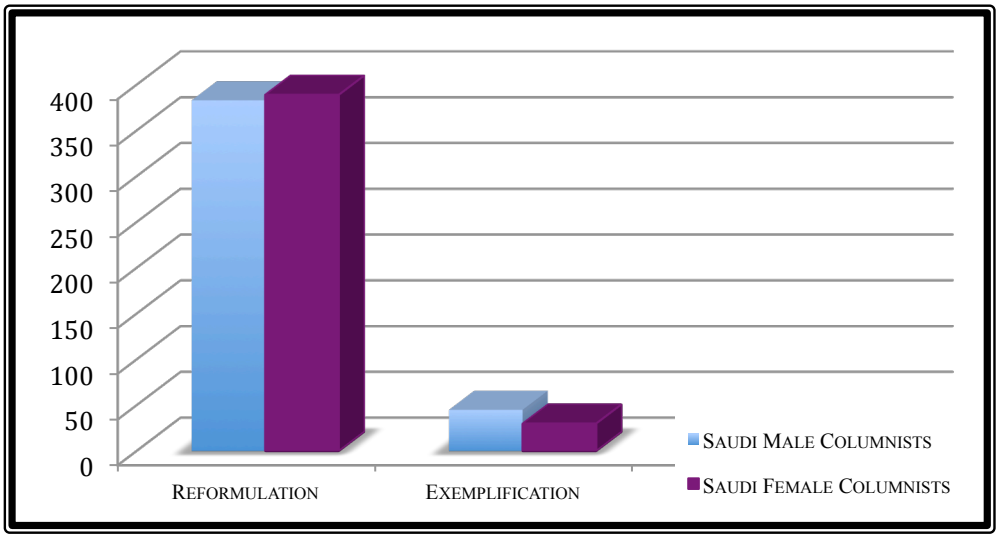


Figure 18. Distribution of Subcategories of Code Glosses in Saudi Opinion Columns

In sum, the previous sections presented the results of the quantitative analysis of the first category of metadiscourse: Interactive resources. Our results showed generally high agreement between male and female columnists in both groups regarding the use of interactive resources. These findings confirmed that all the columnists are following similar ways to organize the propositional information in their texts and assist the readers' comprehension and understanding of the intended messages. The next sections will present the results of the quantitative analysis of the second category of metadiscourse: Interactional resources.

5.1.2. Interactional Resources

Interactional resources is the second major category of Hyland's (2005) model of metadiscourse. These resources are means of expressing the writers' attitudes, opinions, and engagement. They allow the writer to "involve readers in the argument by alerting them to the author's perspective towards both propositional information and readers themselves" (Hyland, 2005a, p.52). Interactional resources include: *hedges*, *boosters*, *attitude markers*, *self-mentions*, and *engagement markers*.

The results of the analysis showed a high ratio in the use of metadiscourse devices regarding interactional resources in both sets of writers: British and Saudi. According to Table (31) and Fig. (19), *self-mentions* were the most frequent interactional resources, with *engagement markers* and *hedges* coming next, followed by *boosters*. *Attitude markers* were the least frequent interactional resources in the corpus. The following sections present a detailed analysis of the five main categories of interactional metadiscourse resources in the corpus of both columnists.

Table 31. *Frequency of Interactional Resources in British and Saudi Corpora*

Interactional Resources	British Columnists				Saudi Columnists			
	Male	***F Per 1000 Words***	***Female***	***F Per 1000 Words***	***Male***	***F Per 1000 Words***	***Female***	***F Per 1000 Words***
Hedges	**1561** (29.61%)	19.222	**1309** (22.33%)	16.794	**1014** (28.16%)	17.581	**882** (26%)	14.382
Boosters	**793** (16.07%)	9.764	**842** (14.36%)	11.445	**462** (12.83%)	8.010	**445** (13.09%)	7.256
Attitude markers	**145** (3%)	1.78	**120** (2.04%)	1.631	**163** (4.52%)	2.826	**125** (3.67%)	2.038
Self-mentions	**1257** (25.48%)	15.478	**1968** (33.57%)	26.752	**1138** (31.61%)	19.731	**1019** (29.87%)	16.616
Engagement markers	**1277** (25.88%)	15.724	**1622** (27.67%)	22.048	**823** (22.86%)	14.269	**926** (27.25%)	15.099
Total	**5033 (45.70%)**	60.744	**5861 (54.29%)**	79.672	**3600 (51.45%)**	62.418	**3397 (48.54%)**	55.393

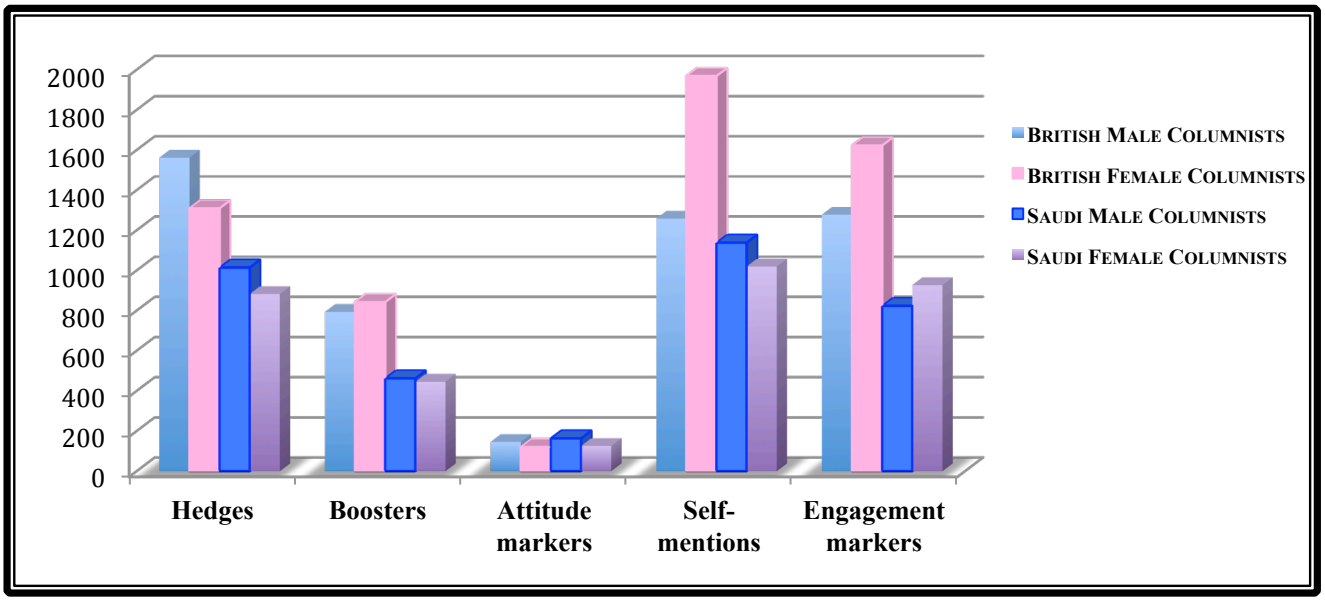


Figure 19. Overall Distribution of Interactional Metadiscourse Resources in the Corpus

A. Hedges

- British Columnists

An important feature of metadiscourse in terms of interactional resources is hedges. Hedges are devices which withhold complete commitment to a proposition, allowing information to be presented as an opinion rather than fact (Hyland, 1998). According to Hyland (2009), "they imply that a claim is based on plausible reasoning rather than certain knowledge and so both indicate the degree of confidence it might be wise to attribute to a claim while allowing writers to open a discursive space for readers to dispute interpretations" (p.75).

British writers have demonstrated high frequency of hedging in their articles. The numerical examination of the data reveals that the total frequency of hedges for males was **1561**, while it was **1309** for females. This showed that male writers used hedges at a higher ratio than female writers. The most frequently used hedges are *about, could, would,* and *should*. This higher use of hedging in male-authored texts was confirmed by the normalized totals where male writers used **19** hedges *per 1000 words*, and female writers used **16** hedges *per 1000 words*. The following table and figure display the frequency of hedges in the British corpus:

Table 32.

Frequency of Hedges in the Opinion Columns of Male and Female British Writers

Hedges	British Male Columnists	Percentage	British Female Columnists	Percentage	Hedges	British Male Columnists	Percentage	British Female Columnists	Percentage
About	230	14.73%	241	18.41%	Maybe	41	2.62%	23	1.75%
Almost	24	1.64%	34	2.59%	Might	91	5.82%	32	2.44%
Apparent	2	0.13%	1	0.07%	Mostly	10	0.68%	5	0.38%
Apparently	17	1.16%	7	0.53%	Often	36	2.50%	51	3.89%
Appear	16	1.09%	13	1%	Ought	14	0.95%	0	0.00%
Approximately	0	0.00%	2	0.15%	Perhaps	36	2.50%	21	1.60%
Argue	14	0.95%	18	1.37%	Plausible	1	0.06%	2	0.15%
Around	27	1.84%	37	2.82%	Possible	19	1.30%	5	0.38%
Assume	13	0.88%	10	0.76%	Possibly	6	0.41%	6	0.45%
Broadly	1	0.06%	2	0.15%	Presumably	1	0.06%	0	0.00%
Claim	30	2.05%	15	1.14%	Presumable	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Could	130	8.32%	91	6.95%	Probable	2	0.13%	0	0.00%
Could not	9	0.61%	18	1.37%	Probably	33	2.25%	20	1.52%
Certain	2	0.13%	0	0.00%	Quite	36	2.46%	16	1.22%
Doubt	2	0.13%	2	0.15%	Relatively	4	0.27%	4	0.30%
Doubtful	2	0.13%	0	0.00%	Roughly	4	0.27%	2	0.15%
Essentially	1	0.06%	5	0.38%	Seem	74	5.06%	41	3.13%
Estimate	10	0.68%	4	0.30%	Should	112	7.17%	104	7.94%
Fairly	5	0.34%	2	0.15%	Sometimes	6	0.41%	17	0.02%
Feel	27	1.84%	82	6.26%	Somewhat	6	0.41%	2	0.15%
Felt	12	0.82%	18	1.37%	Suggest	29	2%	24	1.83%
Frequently	15	1.02%	4	0.30%	Suppose	19	1.30%	7	0.53%
Generally	5	0.34%	9	0.68%	Suspect	6	0.41%	12	0.91%
Guess	2	0.13%	10	0.76%	Tend to	8	0.54%	10	0.76%
Indicate	1	0.06%	4	0.30%	To my knowledge	0	0.00%	1	0.07%
In general	2	0.13%	1	0.07%	Typical	2	0.13%	0	0.00%
In most cases	1	0.06%	0	0.00%	Typically	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Opinion	2	0.13%	2	0.15%	Uncertain	1	0.06%	2	0.15%
View	3	0.20%	2	0.15%	Unclear	2	0.13%	1	0.07%
Largely	11	0.75%	3	0.22%	Unlikely	10	0.68%	3	0.22%
Likely	30	1.92%	15	1.14%	Usually	27	1.72%	6	0.45%
Mainly	2	0.13%	5	0.38%	Would	194	13.27%	176	13.44%
May	73	4.67%	48	3.66%	Would not	10	0.68%	11	0.84%
Total									
British Male Columnists	**1561**					**54.39%**			
Normalized Totals	***F Per 1000 Words***					**19.222**			
British Female Columnists	**1309**					**45.60%**			
Normalized Totals	***F Per 1000 Words***					**16.794**			

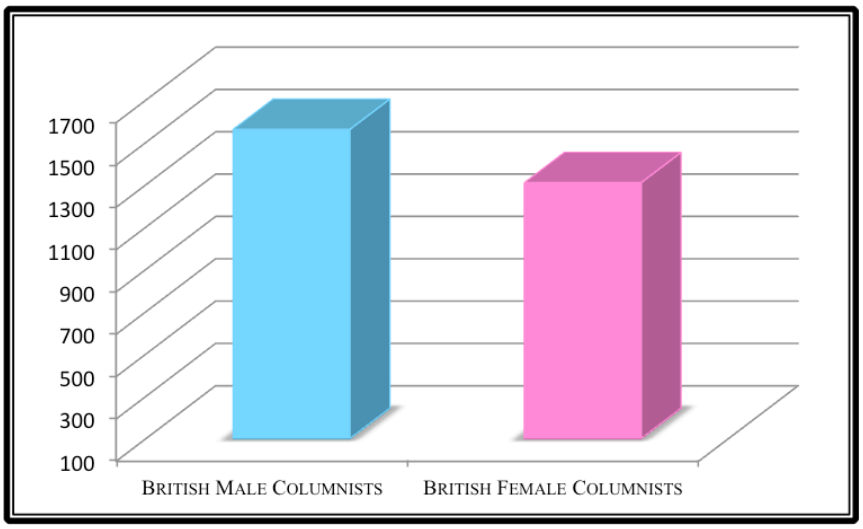


Figure 20. Distribution of Hedges in British Opinion Columns

In order to test the significance of difference between male and female British columnists regarding their use of hedges, the Chi-Square test was run. In Table (33), the Chi-Square value (X^2 = 72.819) is meaningful at α level (α = 0.05) with one degree of freedom (DF=1). This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between male and female British columnists in their use of hedging devices.

Table 33. ***Results of Chi-test of Male and Female British Columnists' Use of Hedges***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	1	72.819	1.23	**X^2 < 3.84**
N of Valid Cases	2870			

Level of Significance = 3.84

- Saudi Columnists

Saudi writers employed a fewer number of hedges in their articles in comparison to their British counterparts. The male writers used **1014** hedging devices as compared to female writers who used **882** hedging devices, and this shows that male writers tended to hedge more. This result is confirmed by the normalized totals which reveal that males used 17 hedges *per 1000 words*, whereas females used 14 hedges *per 1000 words*. This difference of use was not found to be statistically significant as the Chi-Square test equals

0.212 at α level (α = 0.05) with 1 DF. The hedges *about, should*, and *would* were the most frequently used devices. The following table and figure display the total occurrence of hedges in the Saudi corpus:

Table 34. *Frequency of Hedges in Opinion Columns of Male and Female Saudi Writers*

Hedges	***Saudi Male Columnists***	***Percentage***	***Saudi Female Columnists***	***Percentage***	***Hedges***	***Saudi Male Columnists***	***Percentage***	***Saudi Female Columnists***	***Percentage***
About	124	12.22%	128	14.51%	Mainly	9	0.88%	2	0.22%
Almost	23	2.26%	10	1.13%	May	50	4.93%	23	2.60%
Apparent	1	0.09%	0	0.00%	Maybe	23	2.26%	18	2.04%
Apparently	6	0.59%	12	1.36%	Might	24	2.36%	11	1.24%
Appear	8	0.78%	13	1.47%	Mostly	6	0.59%	2	0.22%
Approximately	1	0.09%	0	0.00%	Often	22	2.16%	40	4.53%
Argue	9	0.88%	8	0.90%	On the whole	0	0.00%	2	0.22%
Around	38	3.74%	25	2.83%	Perhaps	11	1.08%	27	3.06%
Assume	3	0.29%	1	0.11%	Possible	21	2.07%	7	0.79%
Claim	8	0.78%	10	1.13%	Possibly	1	0.09%	3	0.34%
Could	60	5.91%	75	8.50%	Presumably	1	0.09%	5	0.56%
Could not	13	1.28%	6	0.68%	Probably	10	1%	2	0.22%
Certain	4	0.39%	0	0.00%	Quite	4	0.39%	22	2.49%
Doubt	6	0.59%	4	0.45%	Relatively	3	0.29%	2	0.22%
Essentially	0	0.00%	5	0.56%	Roughly	0	0.00%	1	0.11%
Estimate	9	0.88%	15	1.70%	Seem	44	4.33%	23	2.60%
Fairly	8	0.78%	1	0.11%	Should	165	16.27%	109	12.35%
Feel	21	2.07%	38	4.30%	Sometimes	13	1.28%	13	1.47%
Felt	11	1.08%	6	0.68%	Somewhat	0	0.00%	2	0.22%
Frequently	2	0.19%	0	0.00%	Suggest	6	0.59%	7	0.79%
Perspective	7	0.69%	3	0.34%	Suppose	8	0.78%	4	0.45%
Generally	10	1%	7	0.79%	Suspect	0	0.00%	1	0.11%
Guess	1	0.09%	0	0.00%	Tend to	25	2.46%	7	0.79%
Indicate	4	0.39%	1	0.11%	Typically	2	0.19%	0	0.00%
In general	12	1.18%	3	0.34%	Typical	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
In most cases	2	0.19%	0	0.00%	Unclear	2	0.19%	0	0.00%
Opinion	12	1.18%	28	3.17%	Unlikely	1	0.00%	3	0.34%
View	15	1.47%	16	1.81%	Usually	4	0.39%	12	1.36%
Largely	1	0.09%	0	0.00%	Would	122	12.03%	105	11.90%
Likely	1	0.09%	7	0.79%	Would not	17	1.67%	7	0.79%
Total									
Saudi Male Columnists	**1014**				**53.48%**				
Normalized Total	***F Per 1000 Words***				**17.581**				
Saudi Female Columnists	**882**				**46.51%**				
Normalized Total	***F Per 1000 Words***				**14.382**				

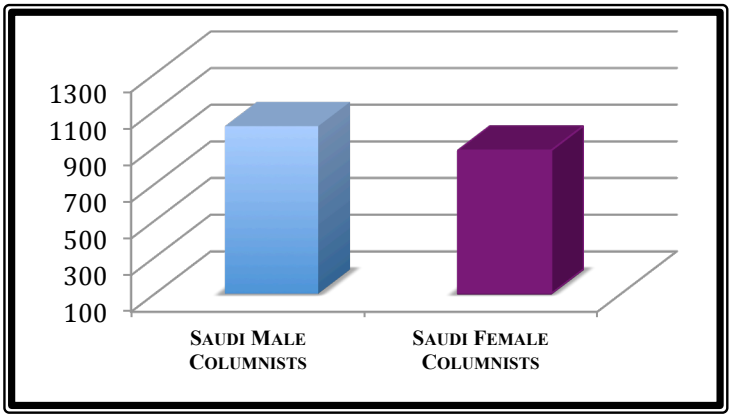


Figure 21. Distribution of Hedges in Saudi Opinion Columns

B. Boosters

- British Columnists

Another metadiscourse feature of interactional resources that indicates writers' assurance in what they write is boosters. Boosters are devices such as *definitely, of course, in fact, indeed, sure, obviously...etc.,* which express conviction and mark involvement with an audience (Hyland, 2004). Boosters allow writers to express their certainty in what they say and to mark involvement with the topic and solidarity with their audience (Hyland, 2005a). They also often "stress shared information and group membership as we tend to get behind those ideas which have a good chance of being accepted" (Hyland, 2009, p.75). According to Hyland (2009), both hedges and boosters represent a writer's response to the potential viewpoints of readers and an acknowledgement of disciplinary norms of appropriate argument. Both strategies emphasize that statements do not just communicate ideas, but also the writer's attitude to them and to readers (p.75). British writers have displayed a high frequency of use of boosters in their writing. The quantitative analysis shows that the male writers have used boosting devices **793** times, whereas female writers used **842** boosters. Boosters such as *know, never, think* and *always* were among the most frequent used devices in the British articles. A comparative look at male and female writers' use of boosters shows that female

writers demonstrated a close similarity regarding the use of boosters. The following table and figure display the distribution of use of boosters in the British corpus:

Table 35. *Frequency of Boosters in Opinion Columns of Male and Female British Writers*

Boosters	***British Male Columnists***	***Percentage***	***British Female Columnists***	***Percentage***
Actually	25	3.15%	27	3.20%
Always	52	6.55%	66	7.83%
Believe	44	5.54%	26	3.08%
Beyond doubt	1	0.12%	0	0.00%
Certain	1	0.12%	0	0.00%
Certainly	20	2.52%	10	1.18%
Clear	16	2.01%	12	1.42%
Clearly	8	1%	6	0.71%
Conclusively	1	0.12%	1	0.11%
Definitely	2	0.25%	4	0.00%
Demonstrate	5	0.63%	6	0.03%
Doubtless	2	0.25%	2	0.00%
Establish	9	1.13%	5	0.00%
Evident	2	0.25%	1	0.11%
Evidently	3	0.37%	0	0.00%
Find	39	4.91%	44	0.05%
Found	35	4.41%	35	0.04%
In fact	12	1.51%	17	0.02%
Indeed	17	2.14%	13	0.01%
Incontestably	1	0.12%	0	0.00%
Indisputable	0	0.00%	1	0.11%
Know	97	12.23%	97	11.52%
Known	9	1.13%	12	1.42%
Never	60	7.56%	90	10.68%
No Doubt	3	0.37%	3	0.35%
Obvious	23	2.90%	7	0.83%
Obviously	9	1.13%	10	1.18%
Of Course	31	3.90%	30	3.56%
Prove	20	2.52%	15	1.78%
Proven	0	0.00%	3	0.35%
Realize	10	1.26%	12	1.42%
Really	48	6.05%	37	4.39%
Show	31	3.90%	55	6.53%
Shown	3	0.37%	4	0.47%
Sure	21	2.64%	15	1.78%
Surely	15	1.89%	15	1.78%
Think	51	6.43%	96	11.40%
Thought	35	4.41%	33	3.91%
Truly	2	0.25%	7	0.83%
True	27	3.40%	24	2.85%
Undeniable	1	0.12%	0	0.00%
Undeniably	1	0.12%	0	0.00%
Undoubtedly	1	0.12%	1	0.11%
Total	**793**	**48.50%**	**842**	**51.49%**
F Per 1000 Words	**9.764**		**11.445**	

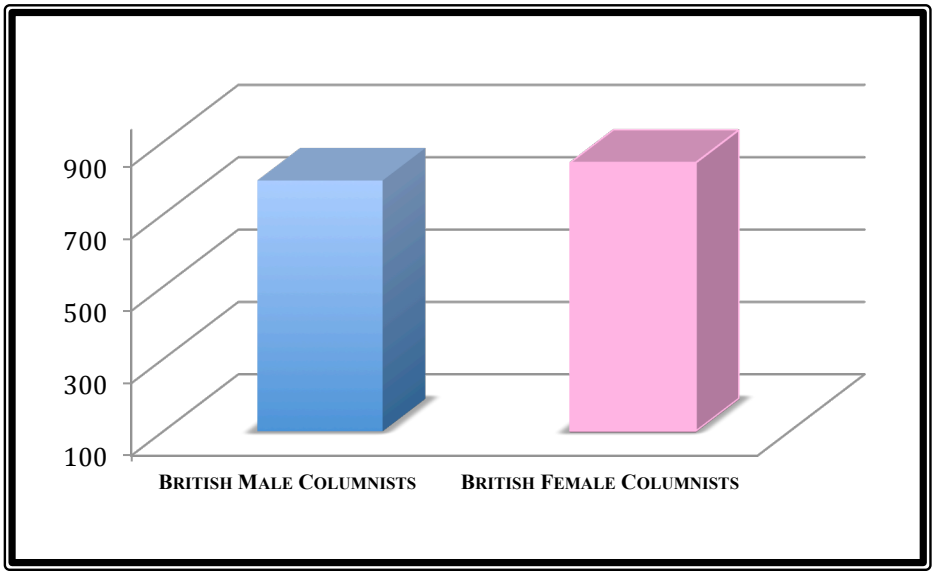


Figure 22. Distribution of Boosters in British Opinion Columns

The normalized totals showed that males used **9** boosting devices *per 1000 words*, whereas female writers used **11** *per 1000 words*. This similarity of use was further confirmed by the Chi-Square test, which showed that there was no significant difference between male and female writers in their use of boosting devices.

- Saudi Columnists

The quantitative analysis of the data demonstrates that both male and female Saudi writers employed a fewer number of boosters than British writers. Male writers have employed **462** boosting devices, while female writers employed **445** boosters in their writing. A close examination of the data shows that both writers have demonstrated a similar use of boosting devices in their articles. This similarity of use was confirmed by the normalized totals in which male writers used **8** boosting devices *per 1000 words,* and female writers used **7** boosting devices *per 1000 words*. As expected, no significant statistical difference was found between Saudi male and female columnists. The following table and figure demonstrate the occurrence of boosters in the Saudi corpus:

Table 36. *Frequency of Boosters in Opinion Columns of Male and Female Saudi Writers*

Boosters	***Saudi Male Columnists***	***Percentage***	***Saudi Female Columnists***	***Percentage***
Actually	8	1.73%	4	0.89%
Always	44	9.52%	17	3.82%
Believe	39	8.44%	25	5.61%
Certainly	10	2.16%	13	2.92%
Clear	9	1.94%	9	2.02%
Clearly	9	1.94%	2	0.44%
Definite	1	0.21%	0	0.00%
Definitely	1	0.21%	0	0.00%
Demonstrate	0	0.00%	6	1.34%
Establish	12	2.59%	5	1.12%
Evident	2	0.43%	3	0.67%
Find	32	6.92%	34	7.64%
Found	12	2.59%	18	4.04%
In fact	11	2.38%	7	1.57%
Indeed	10	2.16%	9	2.02%
Know	57	12.33%	55	12.35%
Known	18	3.89%	13	2.92%
Never	33	7.14%	39	8.76%
No Doubt	5	1.08%	0	0.00%
Obvious	2	0.43%	3	0.67%
Obviously	1	0.21%	1	0.22%
Of Course	12	2.59%	28	6.29%
Prove	4	0.86%	3	0.67%
Realize	14	3.03%	7	1.57%
Really	8	1.73%	32	7.19%
Show	21	4.54%	26	5.84%
Shown	3	0.64%	6	1.34%
Sure	8	1.73%	11	2.47%
Surely	8	1.73%	11	2.47%
Think	30	6.49%	27	6.06%
Thought	10	2.16%	8	1.79%
Truly	8	1.73%	6	1.34%
True	17	3.67%	16	3.59%
Undoubtedly	3	0.64%	1	0.22%
Total	**462**	**51.93%**	**445**	**49.33%**
F Per 1000 Words	**8.010**		**7. 256**	

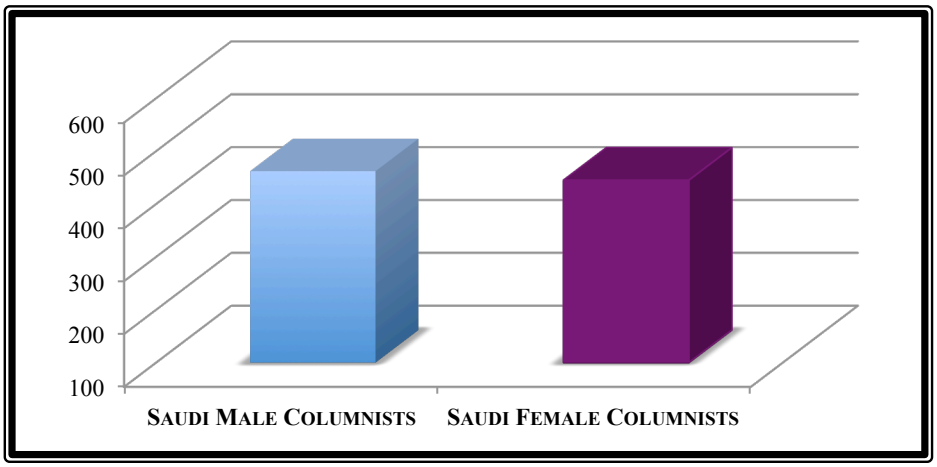


Figure 23. Distribution of Boosters in Saudi Opinion Columns

C. Attitude markers

- British Columnists

Attitude markers express the writer's appraisal of propositional information, conveying surprise, obligation, agreement, importance, and so on (Hyland and Tse, 2004). The quantitative analysis of the data found that attitude markers were the least frequent interactional resources of metadiscourse in the whole corpus of the study. Both genders of writers employed relatively few attitude markers in their articles. As can be seen from Table (37) and Fig. (24), British male writers have used only **145** attitude markers, and female writers used **120** markers.

Table 37. *Frequency of Attitude Markers in the opinion Columns of Male and Female British Writers*

Attitude Markers	*British Male Columnists*	*Percentage*	*British Female Columnists*	*Percentage*	*Attitude Markers*	*British Male Columnists*	*Percentage*	*British Female Columnists*	*Percentage*
Admittedly	1	0.68%	0	0.00%	Hopefully	1	0.68%	1	0.83%
Agree	6	4.13%	9	7.5%	Important	21	14.48%	17	14.16%
Amazed	2	1.37%	3	2.5%	Importantly	0	0.00%	2	1.66%
Amazing	0	0.00%	9	7.5%	Inappropriate	1	0.68%	1	0.83%
Appropriate	2	1.37%	1	0.83%	Interesting	5	3.44%	4	3.33%
Appropriately	0	0.00%	1	0.83%	Interestingly	1	0.68%	0	0.00%
Astonished	0	0.00%	1	0.83%	Prefer	9	6.20%	10	8.33%
Astonishing	1	0.68%	3	2.5%	Preferable	2	1.37%	1	0.83%
Astonishingly	0	0.00%	1	0.83%	Preferably	0	0.00%	1	0.83%
Correctly	1	0.68%	2	1.66%	Remarkable	7	4.82%	1	0.83%
Curious	2	1.37%	2	1.66%	Remarkably	4	2.75%	0	0.00%
Curiously	1	0.68%	1	0.83%	Shocked	4	2.75%	1	0.83%
Desirable	1	0.68%	0	0.00%	Shocking	1	0.68%	1	0.83%
Disappointed	1	0.68%	0	0.00%	Striking	6	4.13%	1	0.83%
Disappointing	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	Strikingly	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Disagree	2	1.37%	1	0.83%	Surprised	1	0.68%	5	4.16%
Dramatic	7	4.82%	0	0.00%	Surprising	6	4.13%	2	1.66%
Dramatically	2	1.37%	1	0.83%	Surprisingly	3	2.06%	0	0.00%
Essentially	1	0.68%	5	4.16%	Unbelievable	1	0.68%	0	0.00%
Essential	5	3.44%	1	0.83%	Understandable	1	0.68%	0	0.00%
Even x	6	4.13%	5	4.16%	Understandably	2	1.37%	1	0.83%
Expected	8	0.00%	9	7.5%	Unexpected	0	0.00%	1	0.83%
Fortunate	2	1.37%	2	1.66%	Unfortunate	1	0.68%	1	0.83%
Fortunately	1	0.68%	0	0.00%	Unfortunately	6	4.13%	2	1.66%
Hopeful	1	0.68%	3	2.5%	Unusual	0	0.00%	2	1.66%
Usual	7	4.82%	5	4.16%	Unusually	1	0.68%	0	0.00%
Total									
British Male Columnists	**145**				**54.71%**				
Normalized Totals	***F Per 1000 Words***				**1.785**				
British Female Columnists	**120**				**45.28%**				
Normalized Totals	***F Per 1000 Words***				**1.631**				

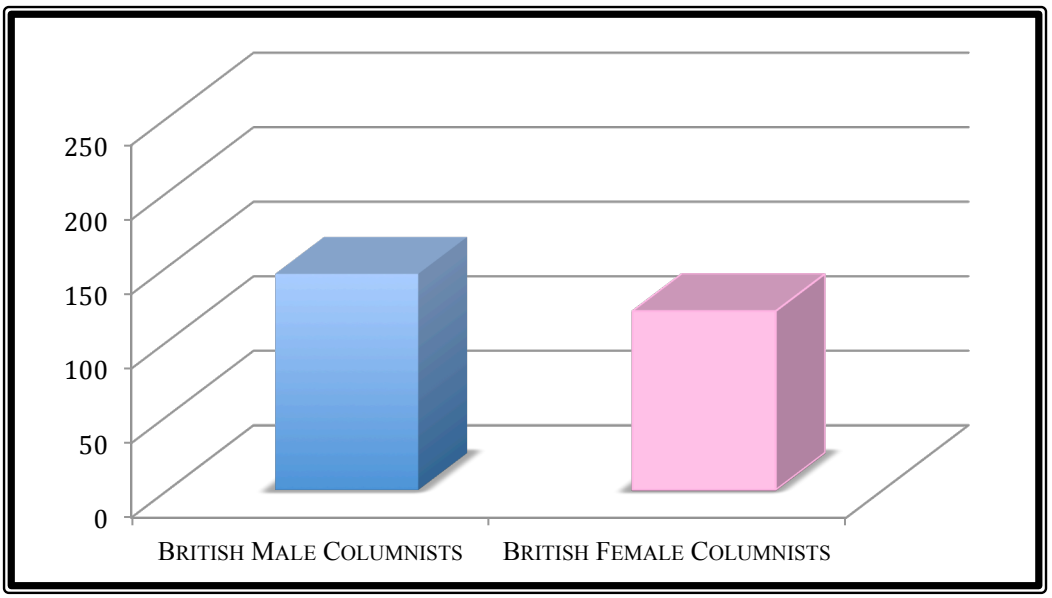


Figure 24. Distribution of Attitude Markers in British Opinion Columns

The normalized results showed that there was only one device of attitude markers *per 1000 words* in both male-authored and female-authored texts. In addition, result of the Chi-Square test, which equals 0.061 at α level (α = 0.05) with 1 Df, revealed no statistical significant difference between British male and female writers in their use of attitude markers.

- Saudi Columnists

Saudi opinion columns also display the lowest scores regarding the use of attitude markers. The Saudi corpus showed that there were **163** attitude markers used by male writers and **125** markers used by female writers. It also showed that the word '*important*' is the most frequent. Interestingly, male writers in both groups used slightly higher number of attitude markers, while female writers in both groups show a very similar number of attitude markers (British=120; Saudi=125). The following table and chart demonstrate the frequency of attitude markers in the Saudi opinion columns:

Table 38. *Frequency of Attitude Markers in the Opinion Columns of Male and Female Saudi Writers*

Attitude Markers	*Saudi Male Columnists*	*Percentage*	*Saudi Female Columnists*	*Percentage*	*Attitude Markers*	*Saudi Male Columnists*	*Percentage*	*Saudi Female Columnists*	*Percentage*
Agree	18	11.04%	10	8%	Hopefully	0	0.00%	1	0.08%
Amazed	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	Important	42	25.76%	26	20.8%
Amazing	0	0.00%	2	1.06%	Importantly	2	1.22%	3	2.4%
Amazingly	0	0.00%	1	0.08%	Inappropriate	1	0.61%	2	1.06%
Appropriate	8	4.90%	7	5.06%	Inappropriately	1	0.61%	0	0.00%
Appropriately	2	1.22%	0	0.00%	Interesting	7	4.29%	10	8%
Astonished	2	1.22%	0	0.00%	Interestingly	3	1.84%	0	0.00%
Astonishing	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	Prefer	10	6.13%	4	3.2%
Curious	0	0.00%	2	1.06%	Remarkable	1	0.61%	0	0.00%
Desirable	2	1.22%	0	0.00%	Shocked	5	3.06%	0	0.00%
Disappointed	2	1.22%	1	0.08%	Shocking	2	0.00%	4	3.2%
Disappointing	0	0.00%	1	0.08%	Striking	1	0.61%	0	0.00%
Disagree	3	1.84%	1	0.08%	Strikingly	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Dramatic	5	3.06%	0	0.00%	Surprised	5	3.06%	4	3.2%
Dramatically	4	2.45%	1	0.08%	Surprising	1	0.61%	0	0.00%
Essentially	0	0.00%	5	0.00%	Surprisingly	1	0.61%	1	0.08%
Essential	4	2.45%	3	0.00%	Unbelievable	2	0.00%	0	0.00%
Even x	2	1.22%	0	0.00%	Understandable	0	0.00%	1	0.08%
Expected	9	5.52%	9	0.01%	Unexpected	1	0.61%	0	0.00%
Fortunate	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	Unfortunate	2	1.22%	2	1.06%
Fortunately	0	0.00%	1	0.08%	Unfortunately	7	4.29%	12	9.06%
Hopeful	1	0.61%	2	1.06%	Unusual	3	1.84%	9	7.2%
Usual	4	2.45%	0	0.00%	Unusually	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Total									
Saudi Male Columnists	**163**					**56.59%**			
Normalized Totals	***F Per 1000 Words***					**2.007**			
Saudi Female Columnists	**125**					**43.40%**			
Normalized Totals	***F Per 1000 Words***					**1.69**			

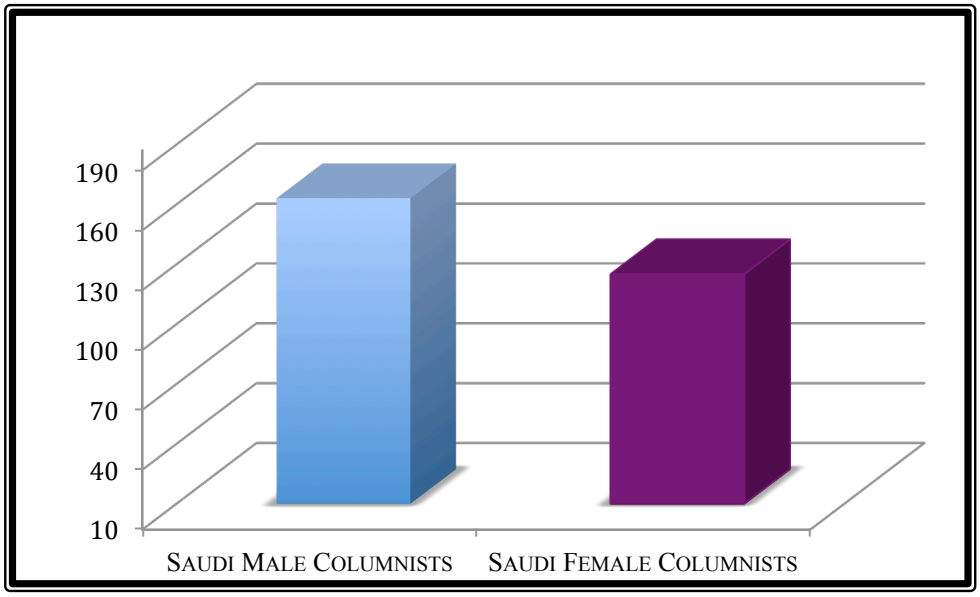


Figure 25. Distribution of Attitude Markers in Saudi Opinion Columns

The low frequency of attitude markers was confirmed also by the normalized results: males used 2 attitude markers *per 1000 words*, and females used 1 *per 1000 words*. In addition, the value of Chi-Square ($x^2 = 0.921$), at α level ($\alpha = 0.05$) with one Df, showed that there no is significant difference between male and female writers in the use of attitude markers in the Saudi corpus.

D. Self -mentions

- British Columnists

Self-mentions reflect the degree of author presence in terms of the incidence of first person pronouns and possessives (Hyland and Tse, 2004). This category of interactional resources refers typically to the use of first person pronouns and possessive adjectives such as *I*, *me, mine, we, our,* and *ours.* The corpus analyzed showed that there is a high ratio of using these explicit references to the authors in the British articles. The total frequency of self-mentions in males' articles was **1257**, and in females' articles was **1968**. Female writers show a more frequent use of self-mentions and this result suggests that female writers explicitly give reference to themselves more than male writers. The first singular person pronoun (*I*) was the most frequently used self-mention device in the data. It was used by male and female writers **490**, and **832** times respectively. Table (39) and Fig.(26) demonstrate the frequency of use of self-mentions in the British corpus:

Table 39. *Frequency of Self-mentions in the Opinion Columns of British Writers*

Self Mentions	***British Male Columnists***	***Percentage***	***British Female Columnists***	***Percentage***
I	490	39%	832	42.27%
We	367	29.12%	414	21.03%
Me	81	6.44%	160	8.13%
My	118	9.38%	273	13.87%
Our	117	9.30%	180	9.14%
Us	79	6.28%	104	5.28%
Mine	5	0.39%	4	0.20%
The writer	0	0.00%	1	0.05%
Total	**1257**	**38.97%**	**1968**	**61.02%**
Normalized Totals	***F Per 1000 Words***	**15.47**	***F Per 1000 Words***	**26.75**

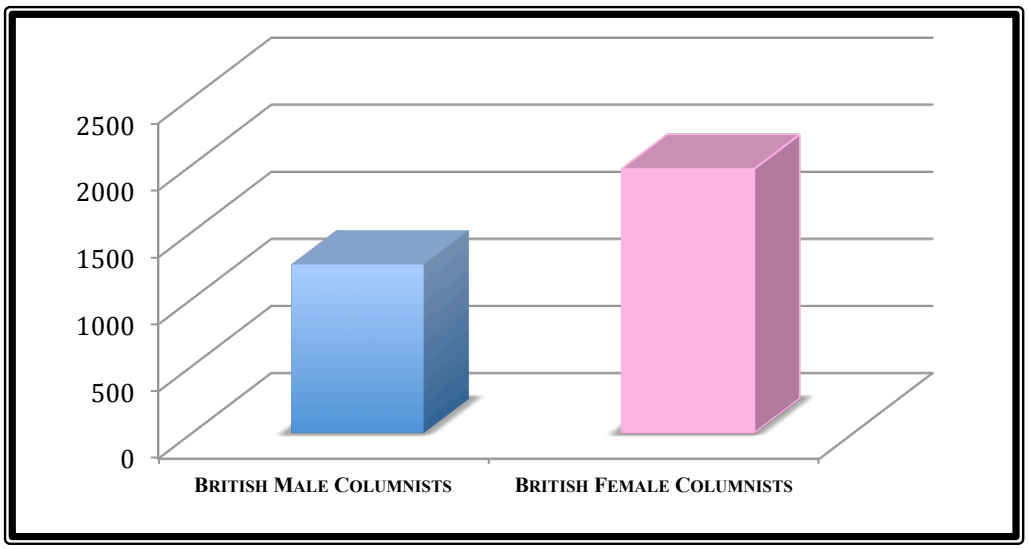


Figure 26. Distribution of Self-mentions in British Opinion Columns

As the above results illustrated, female columnists used fairly larger frequencies of self-explicit references in their opinion texts more than their male counterparts. This obvious gender-based difference was confirmed by the normalized totals in which females used 26.75 *per 1000 words*, whereas males used 15.47 *per 1000 words*. This difference in the results of using self-mentions was tested using Pearson's Chi-Square test, and was found to be statistically significant (Table.40). The results of the Chi-Square test at α=0.05 with 1 degree of freedom (DF=1) indicated that differences between two genders

in the use of self-mentions were extremely statistically different.

Table 40. ***Results of Chi-test of Male and Female British Columnists' Use of Self-mentions***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	1	47.635	1.36	**$X^2 < 3.84$**
N of Valid Cases	3225			

Level of Significance = 3.84

- Saudi Columnists

Saudi writers also show a high tendency in using self-mentions in their articles. As Table (41) and Fig. (27) display, both male and female writers showed a close similarity of use of self-mention devices. The first singular person pronoun (*I*) was also found to be the most frequent used self-mentions in the Saudi corpus. It was used by male and female writers **381**, and **337** times respectively and the possessive pronoun (*mine*) was the least used self-mention as it was used **6** times only by both genders.

Table 41. *Frequency of Self-mentions in the Opinion Columns of Saudi Writers*

Self Mentions	***Saudi Male Columnists***	***Percentage***	***Saudi Female Columnists***	***Percentage***
I	381	33.47%	337	33.07%
We	312	27.41%	269	26.39%
Me	79	6.94%	70	6.86%
My	119	10.45%	89	0.14%
Our	167	14.67%	178	17.46%
Us	74	6.50%	70	6.86%
Mine	6	0.52%	6	0.58%
Total	**1138**	**0.95%**	**1019**	**0.85%**
Normalized Totals	***F Per 1000 Words***	**19.73**	***F Per 1000 Words***	**16.61**

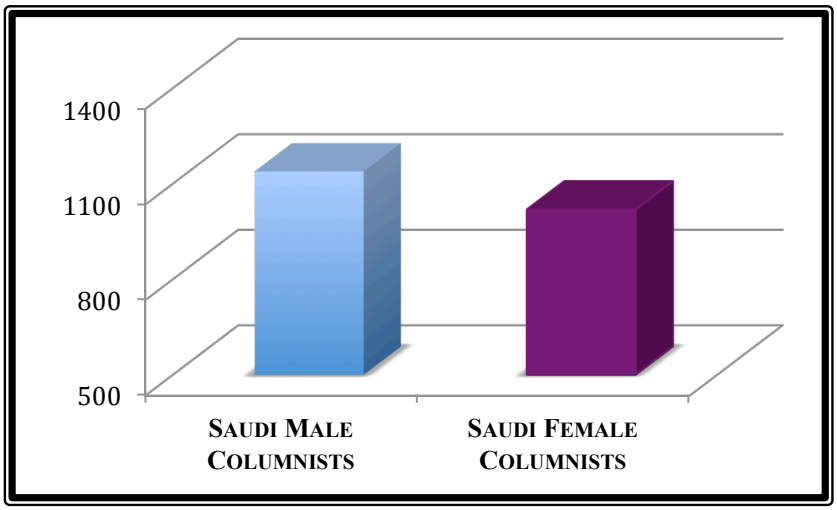


Figure 27. Distribution of Self-mentions in Saudi Opinion Columns

The normalized results revealed that male columnists used 19 self-mentions *per 1000 words*, whereas female columnists used 16 self-mentions *per 1000 words*. The difference of use of self-mentions was found to be not statistically significant. The Chi-Square tests, at α=0.05 with 1 degree of freedom (DF=1) showed no statistical significant difference between the use of males and females Saudi writers in their use of self-mentions (Table. 42).

Table 42. ***Results of Chi-test of Male and Female Saudi Columnists' Use of Self-mentions***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	1	0.119	1.36	**$X^2 > 3.84$**
N of Valid Cases	2157			

E. Engagement markers

- British Columnists

Engagement markers is the final sub-category of interactional resources of metadiscourse. These devices seek to build a connection with readers to both stress solidarity and position them by anticipating possible objections and guiding their thinking. Based on their previous experiences with texts, writers make predictions about

how readers are likely to react to their arguments and craft their texts to explicitly address them at certain points (Hyland, 2001a). Engagement markers include reader pronouns, personal asides, references to sharedness, directives, and questions (Hyland, 2011).

The analysis of the British corpus indicates that both genders used a high frequency of engagement markers to directly address the readers in their articles. The analysis reveals that female British writers used a higher number of engagement markers than did male British writers. **1622** engagement devices were used by females in contrast to **1277** engagement devices used by males. The personal pronouns *we, you, your, our*, and *us* were the most frequently used engagement markers in the British articles. The following table and chart display the occurrence and the distribution of engagement markers in the British corpus:

Table 43. *Frequency of Engagement Markers in the Opinion Columns of Male and Female British Writers*

Engagement Markers	*British Male Columnists*	*Percentage*	*British Female Columnists*	*Percentage*	*Engagement Markers*	*British Male Columnists*	*Percentage*	*British Female Columnists*	*Percentage*
Add	3	0.23%	1	0.06%	Estimate	0	0.00%	1	0.06%
Apply	0	0.00%	1	0.06%	Find	10	0.78%	7	0.43%
Assume	5	0.39%	1	0.06%	Follow	1	0.07%	0	0.00%
By the way	1	0.07%	0	0.00%	Go	18	1.40%	11	0.67%
Calculate	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	Have to	11	0.86%	15	0.92%
Choose	3	0.23%	3	0.18%	Imagine	8	0.62%	9	0.55%
Connect	1	0.07%	0	0.00%	Incidentally	2	0.11%	0	0.00%
Consider	2	0.11%	2	0.12%	Increase	1	0.07%	0	0.00%
Contrast	1	0.07%	0	0.00%	Let	11	0.86%	21	1.29%
Consult	0	0.00%	1	0.06%	Let's	6	0.46%	30	1.84%
Define	0	0.00%	2	0.12%	Let us	7	0.54%	3	0.18%
Determine	3	0.23%	0	0.00%	Look at	1	0.07%	5	0.30%
Do not	29	2.27%	31	1.91%	Mark	0	0.00%	1	0.06%
Ensure	1	0.07%	0	0.00%	Must	4	0.31%	8	0.49%
Order	2	0.11%	0	0.00%	Need to	11	0.86%	17	1.04%
Ought	10	0.78%	0	0.01%	Note	1	0.07%	0	0.00%
Recall	1	0.07%	0	0.00%	Notice	5	0.39%	0	0.00%
Review	1	0.07%	0	0.00%	Observe	1	0.07%	0	0.00%
See	28	2.19%	26	1.60%	Our	117	9.16%	180	11.24%
Show	5	0.39%	1	0.06%	Pay	6	0.46%	2	0.12%
Suppose	4	0.31%	0	0.00%	Prepare	3	0.23%	2	0.12%
Us	80	6.26%	104	6.41%	Use	9	0.70%	4	0.24%
We	367	28.73%	411	25.33%	Remember	14	1.09%	8	0.49%
Your	82	6.42%	162	10%	Should	69	5.40%	17	1.04%
Think of	2	0.11%	6	0.36%	Set	1	0.07%	0	0.00%
You	321	25.13%	521	32.12%	Take	7	0.54%	5	0.30%
Think about	1	0.07%	3	0.18%	The reader	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
	British Male Columnists					*British Female Columnists*			
Total	**1277**					**1622**			
Normalized Totals	**15.72**					**22.43**			
Percentage	**44.04%**					**55.95%**			

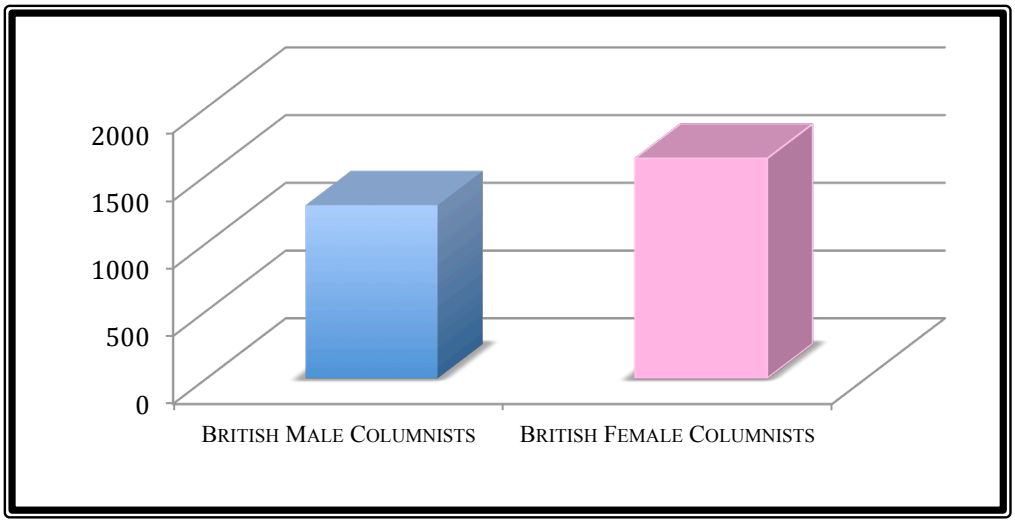


Figure 28. Distribution of Engagement Markers in British Opinion Columns

The higher use of engagement makers in female-authored texts was confirmed by the normalized results which showed female columnists used 22 engagement markers *per 1000 words*, whereas male columnists used 15 markers *per 1000 words*. The statistical results revealed that this difference of use of engagement markers in the British corpus was statistically significant as illustrated in Table (44):

Table 44. ***Results of Chi-test of Male and Female British Columnists' Use of Engagement Markers***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	1	21.780	1.23	$X^2 < 3.84$
N of Valid Cases	2899			

Level of Significance = 3.84

- Saudi Columnists

Saudi writers also have used engagement markers in their articles to address the readers and involve them in the discussion of various topics. The results of the analysis reveal that engagement markers were considerably less frequent in the opinion columns in the Saudi corpus than in the British corpus. The analysis shows that Saudi male writers have used **823** engagement markers, whereas Saudi female writers used **926**. Female writers show larger frequency of using engagement markers than male writers. Both gender have shown a higher tendency in using personal pronouns (*we, you, your, our*, and *us)* to engage the readers in their articles. The next table and chart show the frequency and the distribution of engagement markers in the corpus of Saudi columnists:

Table 45.
Frequency of Engagement Markers in the Opinion Columns of Male and Female Saudi Writers

Engagement Markers	*Saudi Male Columnists*	*Percentage*	*Saudi Female Columnists*	*Percentage*	*Engagement Markers*	*Saudi Male Columnists*	*Percentage*	*Saudi Female Columnists*	*Percentage*
Add	0	0.00%	1	0.10%	Estimate	0	0.00%	1	0.10%
Apply	2	0.24%	0	0.00%	Find	7	0.85%	0	0.00%
Arrange	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	Go	3	0.36%	4	0.43%
Allow	2	0.24%	4	0.43%	Have to	11	1.33%	3	0.32%
By the way	1	0.12%	2	0.21%	Imagine	0	0.00%	3	0.32%
Choose	2	0.24%	2	0.21%	Let	8	0.97%	11	1.18%
Compare	1	0.12%	2	0.21%	Let's	6	0.72%	3	0.32%
Consider	1	0.12%	6	0.64%	Let us	3	0.36%	1	0.10%
Consult	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	Look at	4	0.48%	1	0.10%
Turn	2	0.24%	0	0.00%	Must	14	1.70%	17	1.83%
Do not	15	1.82%	12	1.29%	Need to	12	1.45%	15	1.61%
Develop	4	0.48%	0	0.00%	Note	1	0.12%	0	0.00%
Employ	1	0.12%	0	0.00%	Notice	1	0.12%	1	0.10%
Ensure	2	0.24%	0	0.00%	Our	159	19.31%	178	19.22%
Order	0	0.00%	1	0.10%	Pay	0	0.00%	3	0.32%
Recall	1	0.12%	0	0.00%	Prepare	1	0.12%	0	0.00%
Picture	1	0.12%	0	0.00%	Use	3	0.36%	1	0.10%
See	14	1.70%	18	1.94%	Remember	1	0.12%	7	0.75%
Show	3	0.36%	2	0.21%	Should	20	2.43%	14	1.51%
Suppose	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	Set	0	0.00%	1	0.10%
Us	73	8.86%	69	7.45%	Take	6	0.72%	3	0.32%
We	312	37.91%	269	29.04%	Think about	1	0.12%	2	0.21%
Your	43	5.22%	57	6.15%	Think of	0	0.00%	1	0.10%
The reader	9	1.09%	3	0.32%	You	73	8.86%	208	22.46%
	Saudi Male Columnists					*Saudi Female Columnists*			
Total	**823**					**926**			
Normalized Totals	**14.26**					**15.09**			
Percentage	**47.05%**					**52.94%**			

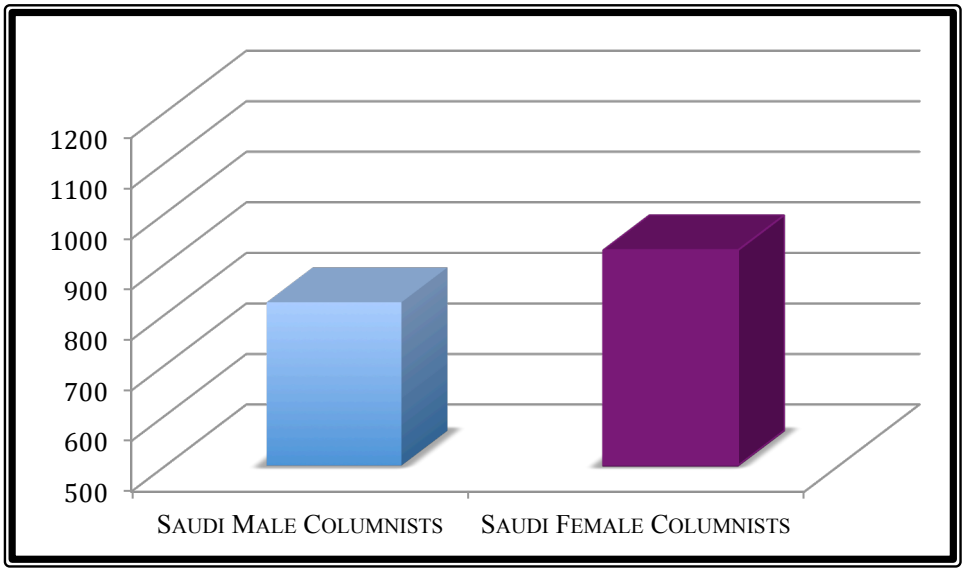


Figure 29. Distribution of Engagement Markers in Saudi Opinion Columns

The normalized totals found that female and male Saudi columnists showed a close similarity in their use of engagement markers. The results of the Chi-Square test also revealed no significant difference of use in this category of interactional sources.

General Summary of Results

- Male and female writers, both British and Saudi, show a frequent use of metadiscourse resources in the genre of newspaper opinion columns. Metadiscourse resources were found in the entire corpus.
- Generally speaking, male and female writers in both groups show a close similarity use of interactive resources. Particularly, the use of *transition markers, frame markers,* and *code glosses* was similar as illustrated in Table (13).
- *Transition markers* stand out as the most frequent category of metadiscourse resources in both corpora: British and Saudi.
- *Endophoric markers* represent the least frequent category of interactive metadiscourse and were used with an equal low frequency by both genders in both groups: British and Saudi.
- *Self-mentions* were the most frequent interactional metadiscourse in both groups of writers, followed by *engagement markers* and *hedges. Self-mentions* were also the most obvious gender-based variation in the British corpus as shown in Table (39).
- *Attitude markers* represent the least frequent category of interactional metadiscourse and were used with an equal low frequency by both genders in both groups: British and Saudi.
- Statistical tests revealed that British female writers had a great tendency to use more interactional resources than male writers in their opinion columns. Female

writers used a higher significant frequency of *self-mentions*, and *engagement markers*. See Tables (40) & (44).

- Saudi male writers have used a higher number of interactional resources than female writers except the case of *engagement markers*.
- Significant gender-based differences between male and female columnists were found in the use of *hedges*, *self-mentions*, and *engagement markers*.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter has presented in details the results of the quantitative analysis of the use of metadiscoursal resources in British and Saudi opinion texts. Findings suggest that both interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers are present in British and Saudi opinion columns, but that there are variations in the distribution of these markers. In addition, the chapter has identified some gender-based differences in the use of metadiscourse resources in both groups of writers. The next chapter will go on to present the findings of the analysis of gender differences in the use of selected linguistic features, topic-choice, writing style, and text length.

VI. Chapter Six

Results & Findings

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN SELECTED LINGUISTIC FEATURES

6.0. Introduction

One of the primary purposes of this study was to examine gender differences in language use across the two groups of columnists: British and Saudi. The findings of the analysis of the 320 opinion pieces confirmed the occurrence of gender differences in the use of certain linguistic features. Results also confirmed significant gender differences in topic-choice and writing style of the columnists.

This chapter presents the findings of the analysis investigating possible differences between male and female columnists in relation to their use of these linguistic features. The analysis included examining gender differences in the use of adjectives, nouns, verbs, adverbs, pronouns, prepositions, and articles. It also investigated gender differences in relation to topic-selection, writing style, and text length.

The quantitative investigation of gender-based differences in selected linguistic features in British and Saudi opinion texts was carried out manually and electronically using the software AntConc. Comparisons of frequencies of lexical items in both corpora were made after results have been normalized per 1000 words based on Biber, Conrad, and Reppen (1998). According to these authors, normalization is " a statistical process of norming raw frequency counts of texts of different lengths" (Biber, Conrad, and Reppen 1998, p. 263). For each of the linguistic features (adjectives, verbs, nouns, adverbs, prepositions, articles and pronouns) a normalized comparative analysis was performed in search for significant statistical gender differences among opinion columnists.

The results of the study revealed that women columnists in both groups tended to use more adjectives, more personal pronouns, and more feminine nouns in their columns than men columnists. In addition, women were more likely to write about feminine topics using a personal style. In contrast, male columnists in both groups are using more verbs, using more numerical terms, relying in more information and facts in their opinion texts, and writing more about politics, business, and economy using a factual style.

6.1. Gender Differences in Adjectives

Adjectives are a distinct lexical category that constitutes a major word class in English (Tucker, 1998). They are members of an open set, comprising an "unrestricted, indeterminately large membership" (Lyons, 1968, p.436). Adjectives, especially attributive[2] adjectives, and adjectival terms are found to occur with considerably greater frequency in the more planned kinds of written language and therefore contribute to the information density of a text (Chafe and Danielewicz, 1987, p.101).

In this study, adjectives were analyzed in terms of a quantitative frequency analysis, in order to display gender differences among opinion columnists. Therefore, the syntax of adjectives and the different classifications of adjectives are not taken into account. In other words, exploring adjectives in terms of their meaning and collocations is not a concern of this study. The 320 opinion columns were searched manually for all types of adjectives. All the tokens of adjectives were examined carefully within the context of use to eliminate errors and maximize accuracy. The eight categories of adjectives classified by Dixon's (1977) were included in the quantitative analysis. Theses are: dimension (e.g., *big, small, long, short*); physical property (e.g., *hard, soft, light,*

[2] Attributive adjectives come usually before their nouns. They are part of the noun phrase headed by the noun they modify such as "*he is an old man*" , or "*my late uncle was a doctor*".

heavy); colour (e.g., *yellow, pink, black*); human propensity (e.g., *sad, jealous, happy, angry*); age (e.g., *old, young, new*); value (e.g., *good, bad, perfect, excellent*); speed (e.g., *fast, quick, slow*); and position (e.g., *right, left, near, far*). Present and past participle forms functioning as adjectives, such as *challenging negative attitude* and *the occupied lands* were also included in the frequency count. In addition, comparative and superlative forms of adjectives were taken into account.

It has been claimed that there is a gender difference in the use of adjectives. It is believed that women are credited with using exact colour terms and certain adjectives such as *charming, divine, lovely, adorable*, and *sweet* more than men (Lakoff, 1975).

The quantitative analysis revealed that the articles under study contain a high frequency of adjectives. More specifically, it showed that female writers of both groups have used significantly more adjectives than did male writers. It also revealed that female writers of both groups have used in their opinion texts more colour terms than did male writers. The distribution of adjectives in British and Saudi articles is shown in Table (46) and Figure (30).

Table 46. *Frequency of Adjectives in British and Saudi Corpora*

	Frequency of Adjectives					
	Male	**Percentage**	**Per 1000 Words**	**Female**	**Per 1000 Words**	**Percentage**
British Columnists	**3375**	**45.07%**	**41.559**	**4112**	**55.896**	**54.92%**
Saudi Columnists	**2812**	**41.59%**	**48.755**	**3949**	**64.394**	**58.40%**

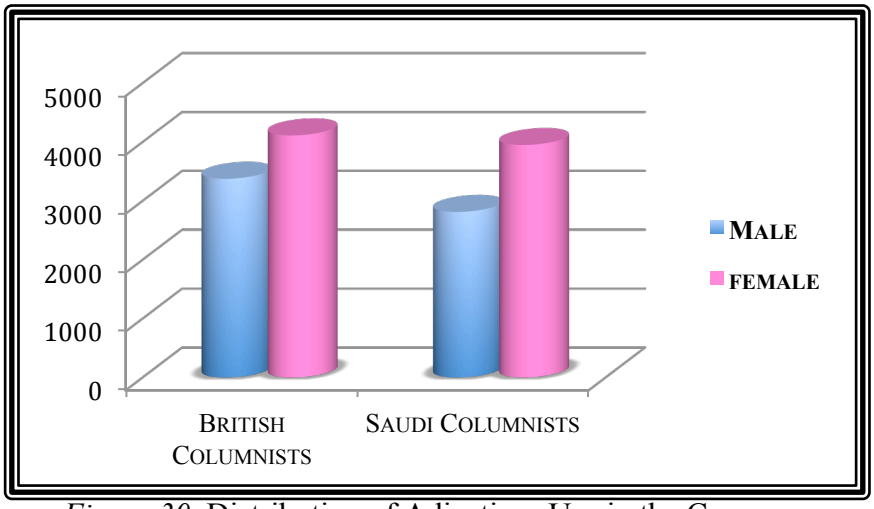


Figure 30. Distribution of Adjectives Use in the Corpus

Examining the **160** British articles, results revealed that female writers are using more adjectives in their opinion texts more than male columnists. There were **3375** tokens of adjectives used by male authors and **4112** tokens of adjectives by female authors. Adjectives were significantly higher in female-authored texts (55 *per 1000 words*) than male-authored texts (41 *per 1000 words*). Most of these adjectives in male and female texts were attributive and they modified nouns as the following examples show:

- *Behind all of these lies sacrifice, from the **poor working** conditions of an **exhausted** workforce to the **water-stressed** cotton fields.*

(Madeleine Bunting, a Female British Writer)

- *While party politics averts its eyes, this is the **chronic** imbalance that defines whole swaths of our **national** life.*

(John Harris, a Male British Writer)

Female writers showed an extensive usage of adjectives and they often use a string of adjectives in their sentences. The following are some examples:

- *Sit by the bedroom window to watch the foxes: scraggy, urban things, depressed and discontented, spirits eroded by the nagging feeling that life was never meant to be so hard, grey, mean and tough on the footpads.*

(There aren't Many Plus Sides to Insomnia by **Lucy Mangan**)

- *Older parents are richer, more settled, less daft and self-obsessed, the hormonal fire is subsiding in their loins, time seems more finite and not to be squandered: they are ready.*

(Older Mothers Aren't Freaks, They're Fabulous by **Janice Turner**)

-*Imagining the amused, gimlet eyes of the popular, well-dressed, cool, wealthier girls scanning your one pair of cheap, high-waisted stonewashed jeans.*

(School Uniforms Are Life's Great Leveller by **Carol Midgley**)

Some of the most frequently occurring adjectives in male articles are *New* (110), *Good* (107), *British* (105), *Great (72), Public* (66), *Old* (65), *Big (*53) and *poor* (43). Interestingly, some of these adjectives also occur with high frequency in female texts such as: *New* (104), *Good* (142), *Old* (102), *High* (72), *Social* (74), *Bad* (65), *Female* (60), *Great* (50), *Young* (55), and *Public* (45).

Similarly, the results also showed that Saudi articles contain a high frequency of adjectives, as there were **6761** tokens of adjectives. Male Saudi writers have showed **2812** instances of adjectival usage (48 *per 1000 words*), whereas female Saudi writers showed a higher frequency of adjectival usage with **3949** instances of adjectives in their articles (64 *per 1000 words*). This finding indicates a significant gender difference in the Saudi corpus. Female-authored texts were very rich with adjectives as the following examples show:

- *I use the word feminine here to denote a whole array of traits — sensual, attractive, stylish, sex appeal, fashionable, vain, glamorous, pretty, elegant, and many more — that each woman chooses according to her own personality and character.*

(Red Lines and Red Lipstick by **Imane Kurdi**)

- *They have proven their capabilities and are qualified to establish a government body with executive powers to influence social, economic and legal changes that can accelerate reforms and enhance the progress of our nation.*

(Call For A Ministry to Empower Women by **Samar Fatany**)

The most frequently occurring adjectives in male articles are: *Saudi* (120), *Social* (109), *Good* (90), *New* (75), *High* (51), and *International* (48). Similarly, female texts showed a high frequency of the following adjectives: *Saudi* (278), *Social* (118), *Good* (100), *Public* (92), *Young* (73), and *Great* (42).

The study found that female writers of both groups tended to use more adjectives and adjectival items in their opinion columns than male writers and this could be recognized as a gender difference. This gender difference was found to be statistically significant as revealed by the Chi-Square test. There is a statistical significant difference in the use of adjectives with female columnists in both groups used higher adjectives than their male counterparts (Table.47). This result is consistent with the findings of previous research which confirmed that women use adjectives more frequently than men do (Lakoff, 1975; Hiatt, 1977).

Table 47. ***Results of Chi-test of Male and Female Columnists' Use of Adjectives***

Columnists	P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
British	0.05	1	8.342	0.0028	$X^2 < 3.84$
Saudi			9.238		
N of Valid Cases	14248				

Level of Significance = 3.84

6.2. Gender Differences in Pronouns

Investigation of gender differences regarding the use of personal pronouns has received some attention from researchers and studies have found similar results. Aries (1996), stated that "the research is consistent in finding that women use personal pronouns-the self-referent *I* and the plural form *We*- more frequently than men" (p.127). For example, Friginal (2009) examined the use of personal pronouns in call centre texts and found that women used more personal pronouns than men. He

confirmed "there are consistent gender differences in the use of personal pronouns with female callers use more *1st person pronouns*, *3rd person pronouns* and *it* than males" (Friginal, 2009, p. 126).

According to Heath (2006), an important distinguishing feature of texts written by females, when compared with males, is their more frequent use of pronouns. Female authors tend to involve their reader more in their discourse, whereas male authors use the text primarily for presenting facts. The pronouns *I, she*, and *you* are used more often by women than men (Heath, 2006, p. 46).

The quantitative analysis of the frequency of personal pronouns in the data under investigation revealed discernable differences between males and females in pronoun usage. Results of the analysis are consistent with previous research and confirmed that female columnists in both groups are using a higher frequency of personal pronouns in their opinion texts than male columnists. British female writers have used **5651** pronouns (76 *per 1000 words*); whereas male writers used **4364** (53 *per 1000 words*). Saudi female writers used **3819** pronouns (62 *per 1000 words*); whereas male writers used **3358** (58 *per 1000 words*) in their opinion columns. Table (48) and Figure (31) display the overall variant frequencies of personal pronouns use in British and Saudi texts:

Table 48. *Frequency of Personal Pronouns in British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

Personal Pronouns	*British Columnists*		*Saudi Columnists*	
	Male	***Female***	***Male***	***Female***
1st Person Singular				
I	490	832	381	337
Me	81	160	79	70
Mine	5	4	6	6
My	118	273	119	89
1st person Plural				
We	367	414	312	269
Our	117	180	167	178
Us	79	104	74	70
Total	**1257**	**1967**	**1138**	**1019**
2nd Person				
You	321	530	73	220
Your	80	165	43	62
Total	**401**	**695**	**116**	**282**
3rd Person Singular				
She	58	250	35	139
Her	75	255	55	201
He	273	184	220	142
His/him	233	280	240	158
It	1090	912	538	635
Its	227	100	105	108
3rd Person Plural				
They	362	475	376	455
Them	136	178	185	210
Their	252	355	350	470
Total	**2706**	**2989**	**2104**	**2518**
Total	**4364**	**5651**	**3358**	**3819**
Pronouns Per 1000 words	**53.737**	**76.817**	**58.222**	**62.274**
Percentage	**43.57%**	**56.42%**	**46.78%**	**53.21%**

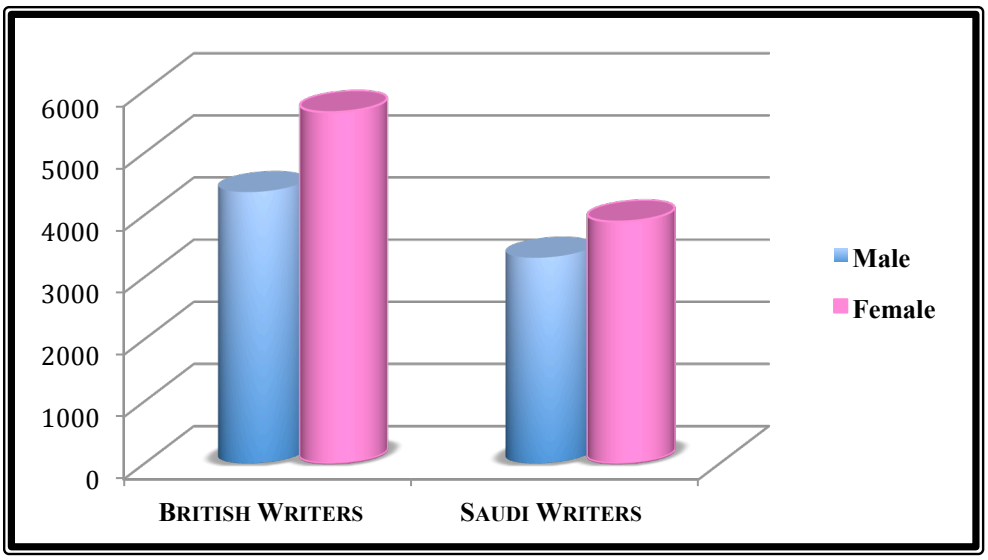


Figure 31. Distribution of Personal Pronouns Use in the Corpus

A closer look at the above table showed some interesting differences between male and female writers of both groups in their use of personal pronouns. Regarding the British writers, most of the forms of pronouns were used with significantly high frequency by British female writers. Specifically, females used first-person pronouns (singular & plural), second-person pronouns, and third-person plural pronouns more than males. The third-person pronouns (*she, her, his, him*) were also used with higher frequency in female-authored articles. In contrast, male writers used more the male third-person pronoun (*he*) and the pronouns *it* and *its*.

Comparing the use of personal pronouns between Saudi writers, we can see that they have used pronouns in a similar frequency in some cases such as the use of *Me, Mine, Our, Its,* and *Them.* Female writers showed a more frequent use of the second-person pronouns (*You, Your*), and the third-person pronouns (*She, Her, They, Their*) than male writers. While the overall result showed that female writers have used more pronouns than males, there are two types of exception: male authors use more first-person pronouns (*I, We*) and more male third-person (*He, His, Him*) in their opinion articles. Generally speaking, female writers of both groups have used the pronoun

'*She'* more frequently than male writers, while male writers tended to make a more frequent use of the male third-person (*He, His, Him*). In addition, the second-person pronoun '*You'* was used more frequently in female-authored articles as they intended to make the reader feel more inclusive. The difference of use between male and female columnists in both groups was tested statistically and found to be very statistically significant. The Chi-Square test revealed that this difference is significant at α=0.05 with 1 degree of freedom (DF=1) as the Table (49), illustrates:

Table 49. ***Results of Chi-test of Male and Female Columnists' Use of Pronouns***

Columnists	P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
British	0.05	1	7.286	0.0029	$X^2 < 3.84$
Saudi			10.167		
N of Valid Cases	17192				

Level of Significance = 3.84

In conclusion, pronoun use is much more female than male in both sets of texts: British and Saudi. This result confirmed previous research (Pennebaker and King, 1999; Koppel *et al*., 2002; Groom & Pennebaker, 2005) that women use more personal pronouns. According to Koppel *et al*., (2002), the pronouns, (*I, you, she*) are strong indicators of female language.

6.3. Gender Differences in Nouns

The texts under investigation exhibit a higher lexical density as a result of using content words. Nouns constitute a higher proportion of this density and contribute to the linguistic complexity of these texts. Consequently, measuring the ratio of nouns in 320 texts (273,773 words) will be a difficult task. Therefore, gender differences were only examined in the frequency of gender nouns. The analysis compared the frequencies of common gender nouns (*child, baby, friend, person*); masculine gender nouns (*men, boy, son, father*); feminine gender nouns (*women, girl, daughter, mother*);

and some neuter gender nouns (*power, love, food, fear*). The results of the analysis showed that there are significant variations in the frequency of gender nouns across gender as the following table illustrates:

Table 50. *Frequency of Gender Nouns in British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

Nouns	*British Columnists*		*Saudi Columnists*	
	Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
Common Gender				
Parent	15	112	11	25
Child	16	320	88	142
Infant	0	2	0	3
Baby	2	50	0	14
Friend	27	68	30	38
Person	16	21	42	24
People	230	180	161	182
Total	**306**	**753**	**332**	**428**
Masculine				
Man/Men	22	167	64	177
Father	9	22	12	22
Husband	3	15	22	25
Son	19	26	12	14
Boy	11	33	12	11
Male	4	17	5	8
Brother	5	10	8	4
Uncle	3	6	0	0
Nephew	0	2	0	1
Total	**76**	**298**	**135**	**262**
Feminine				
Woman/Women	34	364	142	845
Mother	12	116	20	22
Wife	12	22	25	38
Daughter	7	34	14	18
Girl	7	101	15	35
Female	1	13	8	13
Sister	7	12	3	15
Aunt	0	5	0	0
Niece	0	1	0	2
Total	**80**	**668**	**227**	**988**
Neuter				
Love	11	68	9	21
Power	46	28	24	13
Peace	7	4	12	16
Hope	6	21	13	15
Food	4	45	8	50
Virtue	2	0	6	4
Fear	13	22	15	12
Fashion	2	56	1	11
War	68	22	23	2
Death	33	10	12	15
Total	**192**	**276**	**123**	**159**
Total of All Nouns	**654**	**1995**	**817**	**1837**
Items Per 1000 words	**8.053**	**27.119**	**14.165**	**29.955**
Percentage	**24.34%**	**75.31%**	**30.78%**	**69.21%**

Regarding British writers, female writers have used significantly more gender nouns than male writers as shown in Table (50). Female writers used **1995** tokens of gender nouns (27 *per 1000 words*) in their columns; whereas male columnists used only **654** tokens of gender nouns (8 *per 1000 words*). For example, the word '*child*' was used only **16** times by male writers, whereas it was used **320** times by female writers. Similarly, the word *'mother'* was found **12** times in males' articles, and **116** times in females' articles. Interestingly, the masculine nouns '*man, men, boy, son'* and the feminine nouns '*woman, women, girl, daughter'* were used more frequently in women's articles. The following are some examples from British females' opinion columns in which these gender nouns occur:

- Do I think all *men* are rapists? No. Do I think all *women* can be raped? Yes. From one- year-old *babies* to octogenarian *women*, *females* are raped. That's just a fact. *Women* are being beaten back. *Men* who lose their traditional roles want *women* back in theirs: stripped, often literally, of all power.

(It's Hard not to Be Angry When Men Won't Discuss Rape and Abuse by **Suzanne Moore**)

- In a complex and busy world – we would actually know when *women* have become equal to *men*. Some people argue *women* have already overtaken *men*; others claim *women* are still at least two generations away from parity.

(13 Things That Women Are Waiting For by **Caitlin Moran**)

In addition, male writers have used a more frequent use of the nouns *'Power, War, Death*' than female writers, whereas female writers made a more frequent use of the nouns *'Love, Food, Fashion'* in their texts.

Comparing the Saudi group, differences were also found in the use of certain gender nouns as presented in Table (50). Female writers used **1837** tokens of gender nouns (29 *per 1000 words*) in their columns; whereas male columnists used only **817** tokens of gender nouns (14 *per 1000 words*). For example, the nouns *'child, baby,*

people' were found with a higher frequency in female texts. Also, the masculine nouns '*man, men, father'* displayed a higher occurrence in female-authored texts. In addition, Saudi female writers made a statistically significant use of the feminine noun '*Women*' as it was used **845** times (13 *per 1000 words*) in their opinion articles. Such a high frequency of the noun *'Women'* indicates that most of the articles addressed women's issues and these columns are intended to empower Saudi women to make change in society and raise women's awareness of their rights and needs as the following examples show:

- There is a dire need to educate the public and spread awareness about how women who drive can contribute to the welfare of the family. It is time to put into action a plan that would honor the role of women and protect the Saudi family from further abuse. Women should be allowed to drive for the well-being of their families. In other countries, the luxury of a chauffeured car is a privilege that only the rich in society are able to enjoy, but in our case it is a great burden.

(Let Women Drive For The Safety and Welfare Of Their Families by **Samar Fatany**)

- Women staying inside their own houses will not fix the dilapidated traffic infrastructure, it will rather make us more tolerant to its deterioration; this will not fix the fragile ethics educational system. If the violators do not find women on the streets to harass, they will mistreat other vulnerable employees and animals; they will ruin public places and go astray. Detaining women inside their houses will not make a better community, but instead it will sanctify its mistakes, as it will treat it through temporary hiding it under the rug.

(Saudi Women Victims of Restriction for Protection by **Badria AL-Bishr**)

The difference of use of gender nouns was investigated statistically using Chi-Square test. The Chi-Square test showed that this difference was extremely significant at α=0.05 with 1 degree of freedom (DF=1) as the Table (51), illustrates:

Table 51. ***Results of Chi-test of Male and Female Columnists' Use of Gender Nouns***

Columnists	**P**	**df**	**Test Statistic**	**P-Value**	
British	0.05	1	12.061	0.0005	**X^2 < 3.84**
Saudi			12.022		
N of Valid Cases	5303				

Level of Significance = 3.84

6.4. Gender Differences in Verbs

The present study also investigated the frequency of verb use in the opinion columns of the two groups: British and Saudi. In particular, the analysis included: auxiliary and model verbs (*is, was, are, were, being, been, do, does, did, have, has, had, should, must, ought to, can, could, will, would, may, might,* and *shall*), present progressive verbs (-ING form), and past-tense regular verbs (-ED form). The analysis of the frequency of verb forms was carried out manually and electronically. The frequency count of verb forms in the texts was done with the software AntConc followed by a close examination of verb forms in the context in order to ensure that words were performing a verbal function. For example, in searching for –ING forms of verb, AntConc will automatically count all the words with -ing ending, such as *meeting, smoking, something, nothing*, …etc. Therefore, an element of human qualitative assessment is involved by a close reading of each token of verbs in the corpus. Table (52) and Figure (32) below present the results of the quantitative analysis of the occurrences of auxiliary verbs, progressive verbs, and past-tense verbs in British and Saudi corpus:

Table 52. *Frequency of Verbs in British and Saudi Columns*

Verbs	*British Columnists*		*Saudi Columnists*	
	Male	***Female***	***Male***	***Female***
Auxiliary Verbs				
Is/ Was	1173- 471	1060- 364	905- 309	886-266
Are/ Were	571- 150	650- 174	511- 140	520- 120
Being /Been	78- 172	128 - 160	68- 85	70- 77
Do/ Does/ Did	146- 56- 73	201- 41- 80	143- 32 – 47	96- 52- 45
Should/ Must /Ought	109- 34- 13	121-45- 2	186- 55- 0	114- 69- 0
Will/ Would	250 – 212	190- 173	180- 134	183- 113
May/ Might	87 – 81	56- 30	68- 25	43- 11
Can/ Could	245 – 121	255- 104	166- 70	200- 87
Have/ Has/ Had	424-368-166	504- 276- 150	290-182-96	376-227- 76
Shall	6	2	1	2
	5006	4766	3693	3633
Progressive Verbs –ING	2759	2113	1965	1622
Past Tense Verbs –ED	3012	2426	2203	1984
Total	**10777**	**9305**	**7861**	**7239**
Items Per 1000 words	**132.706**	**126.488**	**136.298**	**118.043**
Percentage	**53.66%**	**46.33%**	**52.05%**	**47.94%**

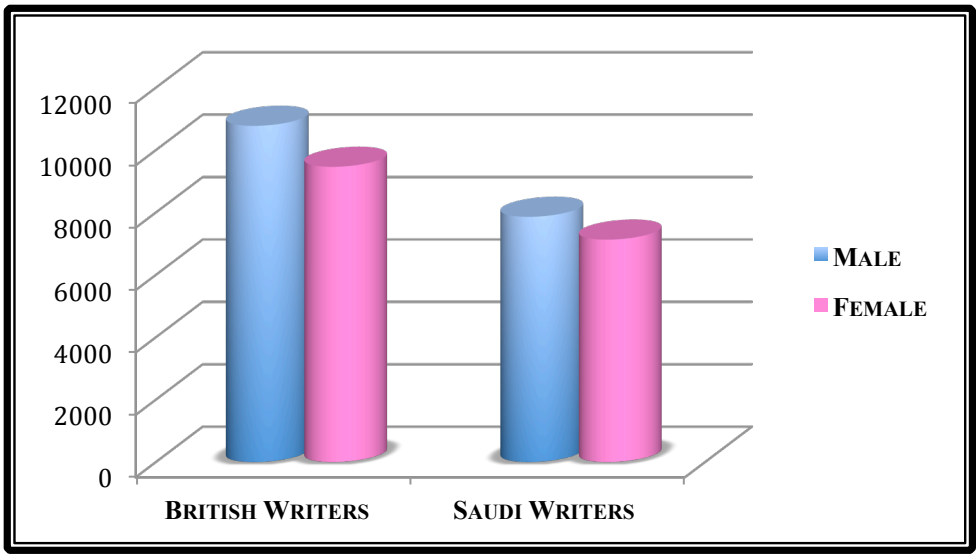


Figure 32. Distribution of Verbs Use in the Corpus

A close examination of the above table reveals the following findings: First, auxiliary verbs, progressive verbs, and past-tense regular verbs occur in all the British and Saudi opinion columns with different variations. Second, auxiliary verbs are the most frequently used forms in the corpus with **17098** tokens. Within these auxiliary verbs, '*is'* is the most frequently used auxiliary verb in both corpora. It occurs **2233** times in British articles and **1791** in Saudi articles. '*Shall'* and '*ought to'* are the least frequent auxiliaries and *'ought to'* was never used in the Saudi corpus. Third, past tense regular verbs come next after auxiliary verbs with **5438** tokens in the British corpus and **4187** in the Saudi corpus. Progressive verbs come last as they occur **4872** times in British articles and **3587** times in Saudi articles.

Regarding gender differences, the results of the quantitative analysis revealed that male writers of both groups showed a higher frequency of use of verb forms than female writers. British male writers have used **10777** tokens of verb forms (132 *per 1000 words*), whereas female writers used **9305** (126 *per 1000 words*). Male writers consistently displayed higher frequency of auxiliary verbs, progressive verbs and past tense verbs than female writers. The following extracts are taken from males' writings and show the use of verb forms:

- It *is* the difference between a club of 27 *reforming* its rulebook and one member, *hovering* by the door, *reading* out a list of demands and *threatening* to storm out if he *doesn't* get his way.

(Britain Can't Pick and Choose on Europe by **Jonathan Freedland**)

- Then we *arrived* there and it *was* beautiful. The sun *was shining* in the nursery garden and there *were* guinea pigs and sunflowers and a little peg 3ft off the ground with "Kitty" written above it, and 30 other two and three-year-olds, *running* around, *drawing, painting, baking* and *falling* over and *scraping* their knees. Kitty stood and *looked* at them for a while, *sucking* her thumb and *thinking* about it. And then she *dived* into the middle of them and *was* lost in the throng. And I stood in the corner and *cried.*

(School Ruined Me and It Will Ruin My Daughter by **Giles Coren**)

The results also showed that Saudi writers made a similar use of verb forms in their articles. Like British counterparts, Saudi male writers used more auxiliary verbs, progressive verbs, and past-tense regular verbs than female writers. There were **7861** tokens of verbs (136 *per 1000 words*) in male-authored columns and **7239** tokens (118 *per 1000 words*) in female-authored columns; the following are some examples from the Saudi corpus:

- This attitude translates to a number of practices, *including* not *giving* any thought until a crisis occurs; *operating* without a plan of action; *thinking* only a week or two weeks ahead, not long term; rarely *seeking* outside help; and *failing* to create long-term plans that *are reviewed* and *worked* on.

(Saudi Arabia and its People are Reactive Not Proactive by **Dr. Khalid Al-Seghayer**)

- At the same time, we also read and hear about a housemaid *committing* suicide by *hanging* herself from a fan in the ceiling of a house, another *killing* herself by *drinking* clorox and a third *jumping* out the window and *falling* to the ground *breaking* her back or leg in an attempt to run away.

(Are We Innocent By **Dr. Ali Al-Ghamdi**)

In sum, the analysis of verb forms in opinion texts in both corpora revealed that male columnists use verb forms with a higher frequency than their female counterparts. In order to test this difference of use of verbs between male and female writers in both

groups, the Chi-Square test was run and it revealed that this difference is statistically significant in the Saudi corpus, but not significant in the British corpus as displayed in Table (53):

Table 53. ***Results of Chi-test of Male and Female Columnists' Use of Verbs***

Columnists	P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
British	0.05	1	3.807	0.0510	$\mathbf{X^2 > 3.84}$
Saudi			5.090	0.0241	$\mathbf{X^2 < 3.84}$
N of Valid Cases	35182				

Level of Significance = 3.84

6.5. Gender Differences in Adverbs

An adverb is a member of a lexical category which is usually used as a grammatical adjuncts of a verb (Trask, 1993, p.9). Adverbs can modify a verb, an adjective, another adverb, a phrase, or a clause. An adverb indicates manner, time, place, cause, and degree (Kleiser, 2008).

The quantitative analysis of the opinion columns investigated, in addition to adverbs ending in –ly, the following adverbs: Adverbs of place (*abroad, here, there, out, outside, nowhere, anywhere*); adverbs of time (*next, soon, after, tomorrow, yesterday, now, recently, soon, then, when, while, later, last*); adverbs of frequency (*always, usually, often, sometimes, never, rarely*); and adverbs of purpose (*in order to, so, so that, because, since*). In addition, the analysis considered the frequency of intensifiers, or adverbs of degree. Intensifiers are simply adverbs such as *very* or *extremely* which strengthen or intensify the meaning of adjectives or another adverb (DeCapua, 2008). The following intensifiers were included in the analysis: *almost, very, too, enough, quite, rather, really, extremely, totally*, *truly* and *highly*.

Results obtained from the quantitative investigation of adverbs confirmed the occurrence of various adverbs in both corpora with variation in frequencies. The following table and figure present the frequency of adverbs in British and Saudi opinion texts:

Table 54. *Frequency of Adverbs in British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

Adverbs	***British Columnists***		***Saudi Columnists***	
	Male	***Female***	***Male***	***Female***
Adverbs of Manners	1185	1335	798	835
Adverbs of Place	150	178	148	127
Adverbs of Time	922	1024	617	670
Adverbs of Frequency	168	250	122	148
Adverbs of Purpose	160	219	142	180
Adverbs of Degree (Intensifiers)	343	340	211	232
Total	**2928**	**3346**	**2038**	**2192**
Percentage	**46.66%**	**53.33%**	**48.17%**	**51.82%**
Items Per 1000 words	**36.005**	**45.484**	**35.335**	**35.743**

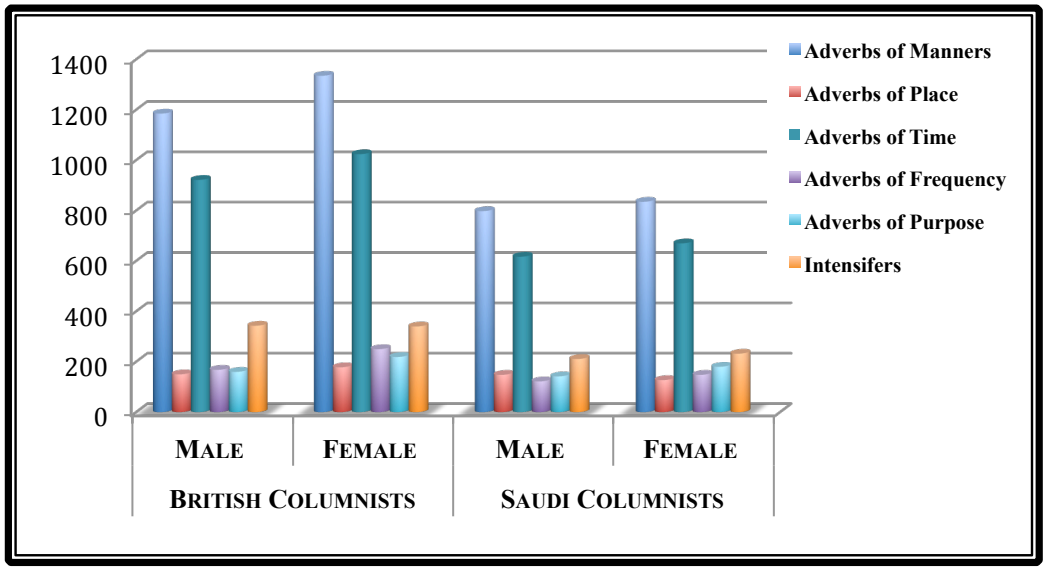


Figure 33. Distribution of Adverbs Use in the Corpus

Comparison of frequencies of adverbs in the British corpus revealed that female columnists used adverbs more frequently than their male counterparts. Female columnists used about **45** adverbs *per 1000 words*, whereas male columnists used **36** adverbs *per 1000 words*. A closer look at the categories of adverbs indicates that the frequencies of *adverbs of manner, adverbs of place*, *adverbs of time*, *adverbs of frequency* and *adverbs of purpose* were much higher in female-authored texts. This finding is consistent with previous studies that showed that women were more likely than men to use adverbs (Hiatt, 1977; Mulac 1998; Aries, 1996). The following extracts from females' columns illustrate the use of some adverbs:

- Keep slowly turning it up, like a dimmer switch, whenever you can. Just resolve to shine, constantly and steadily, like a warm lamp in the corner, and people will want to move towards you in order to feel happy, and to read things more clearly. Host extravagantly, love constantly, dance in comfortable shoes, talk to Daddy and Nancy about me every day and never, ever start smoking.

(My Posthumous Advice for My Daughter by **Caitlin Moran**)

- It doesn't matter if you think you are fighting the feminist cause by railing at newspaper columnists who you believe are insufficiently feminist, covertly racist, blatantly transphobic or anything else. Abusing people is not a good way to get anyone to consider your complaints seriously.

(How to Use the Internet Without Being a Total Loser by **Hadley Freeman)**

Results also revealed that there is no significant gender difference in Saudi opinion columns. Male and female columnists show a similarity in the use of adverbs in their opinion texts, with males using 35.335 adverbs *per 1000 words* and females using 35.743 adverbs *per 1000 words*. The following extracts from the Saudi corpus show some examples of adverbs:

- Men have finally joined women activists around the world in speaking out and challenging negative traditions and the people who support its preservation. Together they are calling for better laws to end the violence against millions of women who are physically and sexually abused, battered by husbands, trafficked into prostitution, and sexually harassed in workplaces and on the street each day.

(A Saudi White Ribbon campaign is the need of the hour by **Samar Fatany)**

-Regretfully, we have not made in-depth studies of the causes of these incidents, crimes and tragedies. We tend to forget that servants and housemaids are human beings like us with the same feelings and sentiments. Like any other people, housemaids can become physically, psychologically or emotionally ill especially as they have left their homes, husbands and children in quest of a better living. They want to make money to build a house, educate their children and raise the standard of living of their families.

(Are We Innocent by **Dr. Ali Al-Ghamdi)**

In spite of the difference in the normalized results in the British corpus which showed that female columnists tended to use higher frequencies of adverbs in their opinion texts, statistical results revealed that there is no significant difference between male and female columnists in both groups regarding their use of adverbs.

6.6. Gender Differences in Conjunctions and Prepositions

Conjunctions and prepositions are linguistic features that contribute basically to discourse coherence. The quantitative analysis also explored the occurrence of conjunctions and prepositions in order to identify possible gender differences between male and female columnists. Results revealed that male and female writers in both groups showed a close similarity in their use of conjunctions and prepositions (See appendix **E**). As Table (55) and Figure (36) display, similar distribution of these linguistic features was found in British and Saudi opinion texts. However, the normalized totals showed that British female writers tended to use more prepositions and conjunctions, whereas Saudi male writers tended to show a higher use of prepositions than female writers. Statistical results of the Chi-Square test revealed that the difference of use of these linguistic features in both groups was not statistically significant.

Table 55. *Frequency of Conjunctions and Prepositions in British and Saudi Columns*

	British Columnists		*Saudi Columnists*	
	Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
Conjunctions	**3833**	**3961**	**3401**	**3594**
Items Per 1000 words	**47.1999**	**53.844**	**58.968**	**58.605**
Percentage	**49.17%**	**50.82%**	**48.62%**	**51.37%**
Prepositions	**9778**	**9157**	**8797**	**7846**
Items Per 1000 words	**120.405**	**124.476**	**152.527**	**127.941**
Percentage	**51.63%**	**48.36%**	**52.85%**	**47.14%**

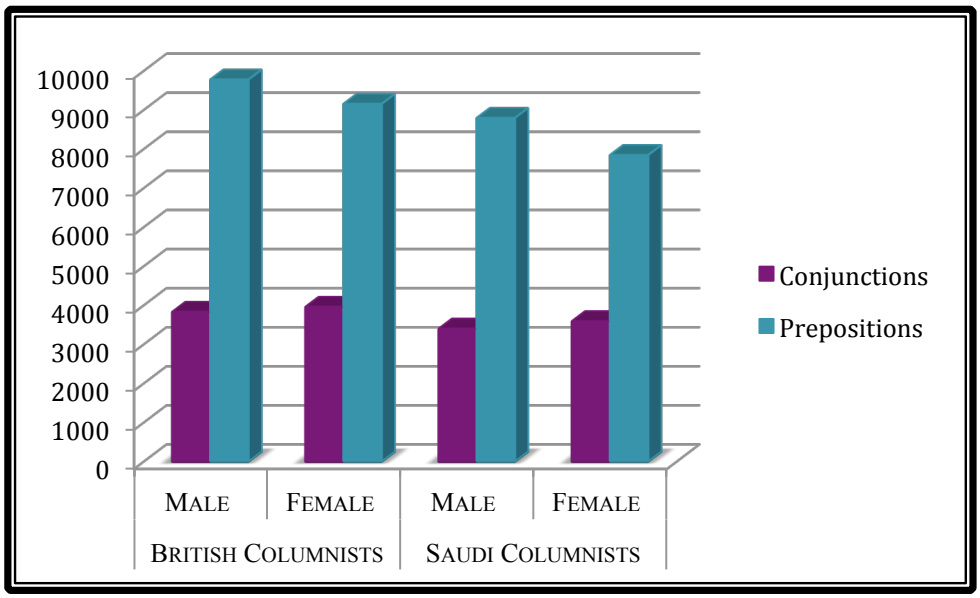


Figure 34. Distribution of Conjunctions and Prepositions in the Corpus

6.7. Gender Differences in Articles, Swear Words, and Numerical Terms

Gender differences have also been investigated in relation to the use of articles, swear words, and numerical terms in research (Koppel *et al*., 2002; Newman *et al*., 2008). A quantitative analysis has been applied to identify possible gender differences among opinion columnists regarding the use of articles, swear words, and numerical

terms. The results of the analysis found evidence of gender-based differences in the frequencies of these variables as the following table and figure display:

Table 56. *Frequency of Articles, Swear Words, Numerical Terms in British and Saudi Columns*

Articles	***British Columnists***		***Saudi Columnists***	
	Male	***Female***	***Male***	***Female***
The	4732	3350	3785	3442
A, An	1890- 279	1960-220	1286 - 234	1540- 180
Total	**6901** (56%)	**5530** (44%)	**5305** (52%)	**5162** (48%)
Items Per 1000 words	**84.978**	**75.172**	**91.980**	**84.174**
Swear Words *Bloody- damn – hell- suck*	**49**	**6**	**2**	**0**
Numerical Terms	**882** (72%)	**343** (28%)	**165** (64%)	**90** (36%)
Items Per 1000 words	**10.860**	**4.662**	**2.687**	**1.467**

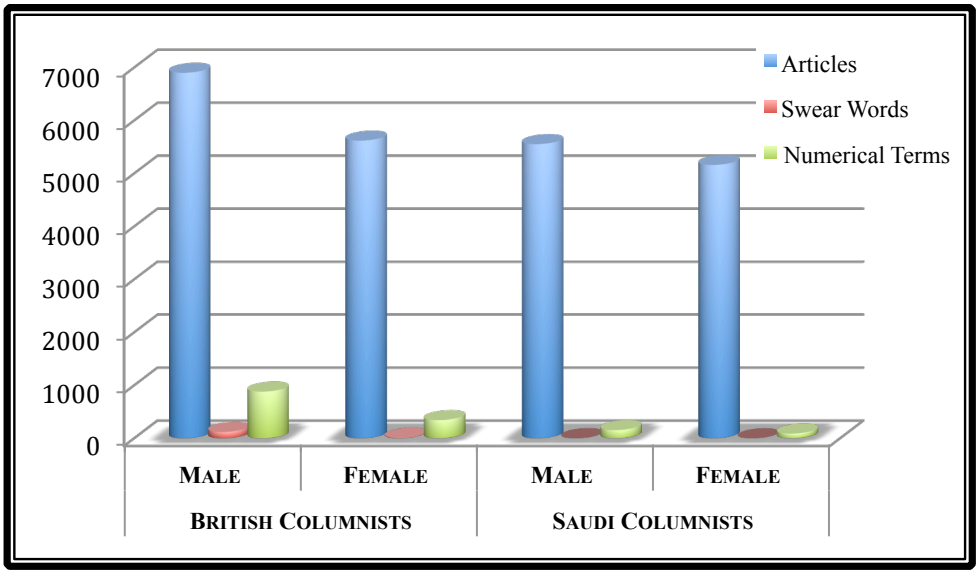


Figure 35. Distribution of Articles, Swear Words, and Numerical Terms in the Corpus

A closer look at the above table shows quite clearly that male writers of both groups are using articles more frequently than female writers. British male writers used **6901** articles (84 *per 1000 words*) in their opinion columns; whereas female writers used

5530 articles (75 *per 1000 words*). Similarly, Saudi male writers employed **5305** articles (91 *per 1000 words*), whereas female writers used **5162** articles (84 *per 1000 words*). The result of the Chi-Square test showed that the difference of use of articles between male and female writers in both groups was statistically significant as illustrated in Table (57). The gender claim that men used more articles in writing than women was confirmed in this study and this result corresponded to the findings of previous research (Mehl & Pennebaker, 2003; Groom & Pennebaker, 2005; Koppel *et al*., 2002; Newman *et al*., 2008).

Table 57. ***Results of Chi-test of Male and Female Columnists' Use of Articles***

Feature	Columnists	P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
Articles	British	0.05	1	13.104	0.0003	$\mathbf{X^2 < 3.84}$
	Saudi			28.929	0.0001	$\mathbf{X^2 < 3.84}$
N of Valid Cases		22898				

The widespread belief that men swear more frequently and use taboo words more than women was confirmed in research (Lakoff, 1975; Kramer, 1975; Gomm, 1981; Coates, 2003; Mehl & Pennebaker, 2003). The results of the analysis confirmed this belief as there are **49** tokens of swear words in male-authored texts in comparison with **6** tokens in female-authored texts. Male columnists are using swear words and taboo language more frequently than female columnists. The following extract from men's columns showed that the writer mentioned taboo language:

*Our relationship with taboo words is complex. Many people, not all of them unscrupulous hucksters operating boiler-room stock scams, do say "f***ing" quite a lot as an intensifier rather than, as it were, a participial adjective. Newspapers generally render the word with asterisks after the initial letter, even though all readers can mentally fill in the gaps (if they couldn't, there'd be no point in the asterisks).*

(Sorry, Time Future Is Not Contained In Time Present by **Oliver Kamm**)

Regarding the Saudi corpus, the use of swear words was very rare. There were only two tokens in males' texts and none in females' texts. This is quite expected because it is a matter of Saudi culture. In fact, it is totally unacceptable to use swear words and taboo language in press and publicity as taboos contradict Islamic values and cultural beliefs.

The statistical analysis also showed that there are significant statistical differences in using numerical terms, with male writers showing a high frequency of use. British male-authored texts exhibited a higher level of numerical terms (882 tokens) in comparison with female-authored texts (343 tokens). The Chi-Square test equaled 3.862 at α=0.05 with 1 degree of freedom (DF=1) and showed that the difference is statistically significant. Similarly, Saudi male columnists used a higher frequency of numerical terms (165 tokens) than female columnists (90 tokens) but this difference was not statistically significant. This result is consistent with previous research which confirmed that men are more likely to use more numbers (Koppel *et al*., 2002; Newman *et al*., 2008). This finding indicates that men's columns are information-oriented and columnists are relying on facts and numbers in supporting their arguments.

6.8. Gender Differences in Text Length

The popular belief that women speak more than men, makes one expect that women would use longer sentences in writing and accordingly, they tend to write longer texts than men. In contrast to this tendency, studies proved that men produce more creative work in research, produce more books and publications, and win more prizes (Callahan, 1979; Bateson, 1990). The results of the quantitative analysis of this study showed that there is variability in the total number of words of opinion columns in the

corpus of both groups of writers. The total number of words in British and Saudi corpora is identified by using the computer software (Linguistic Enquiry and Word Count). To capture a more accurate word count, words in each article were also calculated individually using an online word counter tool. Table (58) shows the total number of words written by the four groups of writers in their opinion columns. The results revealed that male British columnists have used many more words in their opinion articles than female writers. Male writers used **81209** words in their 80 opinion columns, whereas female writers used **73564** words in their 80 opinion columns. The difference in word length between British writers is quite large (**7645** words). Regarding Saudi writers, in contrast to British writers, females have used more words in their opinion columns than males. As shown in Table (58) and Figure (36), female-authored texts are longer than male-authored texts with a difference of **3650** words. This is expected as many of the males' articles were very brief and were fewer than 500 words.

Table 58. *Text Length of British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

Opinion Columnists	Word Count					
	Male	Number of Columns	Percentage	Female	Number of Columns	Percentage
British Columnists	81209	80	54%	73564	80	47%
Saudi Columnists	57675	80	48%	61325	80	52%

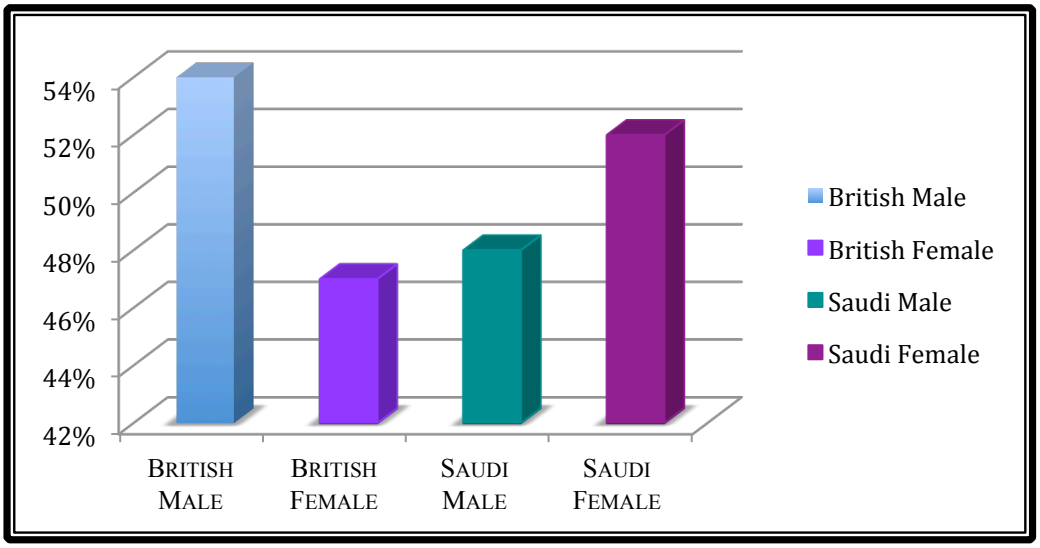


Figure 36. Distribution of Text length in the Corpus

6.9. Gender Differences in Topics

One of the common beliefs about gender, or gender stereotypes, is associated with knowledge about various topics. People tend to categorize certain topics as 'feminine' and 'masculine'. Women usually write about feminine topics such as *family, cooking, fashion, travel*…etc; whereas men write about masculine topics such as *politics, business, economics, sports, technology*…etc. The analysis of the 320 opinion columns proved such gender stereotype and showed that columnists of both gender covered a wide array of topics.

Each column was analyzed individually in order to identify which topics are associated with each gender. The topics were classified into the following: *Political Issues, Social Issues, Financial Issues, Education, Entertainment, Modern Technology, Environment, Personal Experience, Sport,* and *Fashion.*

Results of the analysis of columns' topics showed that female and male writers in both groups demonstrated differing preferences as presented in Table (59) and Figures (37), (38), (39), (40).

Table 59. *Topics of British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

Topics	Examples	*British Columnists*		*Saudi Columnists*	
		Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
Political Issues	Arab Spring- Syria's War- Thatcherism – British Justice	22 (27%)	2 (2.5%)	12 (15%)	0
Social Issues	Marriage- Smoking- Housing- Abortion- Recycling- Family- Working Children- Old Age- Crimes- Rape- Childcare – Obesity – Old Mothers – Racism- Corruption – Domestic Violence – Retirement – Drugs	25 (31%)	52 (65%)	36 (45%)	61 (76.25%)
Financial Issues	Budget- Taxes- Mortgages	4 (5%)	1 (1.25%)	4 (5%)	1 (1.25%)
Education	Schools-Academic Research- Books- Scholarship- Private Education- Curriculums	5 (6.25%)	5 (6.25%)	13 (16.25%)	6 (7.5%)
Entertainment	Travel- Holidays- Movies – Cinemas- Video Games	5 (6.25%)	0	1 (1.25%)	2 (2.5%)
Modern Technology	Internet- Robots- Apple – Google- Smart Phones – Social Media	7 (8.75%)	2 (2.5%)	8 (10%)	5 (6.25%)
Environment	Climate Change- Sea Creatures	3 (3.75%)	0	1 (1.25%)	0
Personal Experience	Joining the gym- Family Holiday- Personal Habits	4 (5%)	11 (13.75%)	2 (2.5%)	2 (2.5%)
Sport	Football- World's Cup	2 (2.5%)	0	2 (2.5%)	0
Fashion	High Heels- Lipsticks- Models- Cosmetics – Hair Style	0	4 (5%)	0	2 (2.5%)
History	British Wars- Nazi Horrors- Czech Story	3 (3.75%)	3 (3.75%)	1 (1.25%)	1 (1.25%)

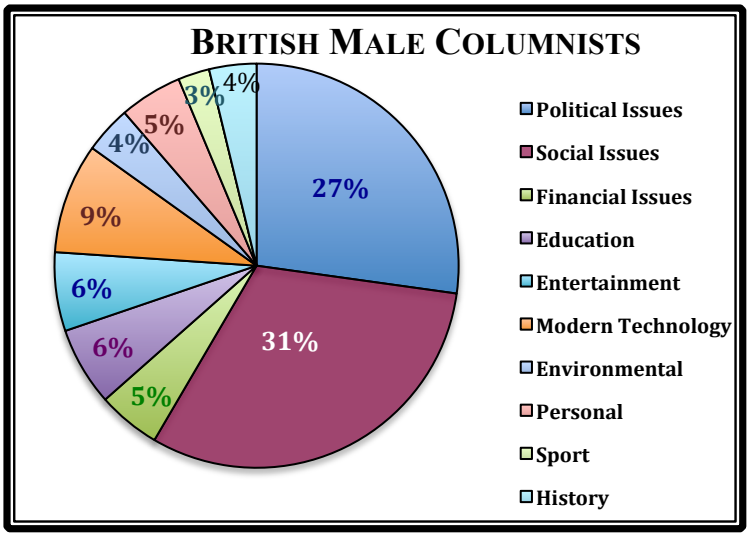


Figure 37. Distribution of Topics in British Males' Columns

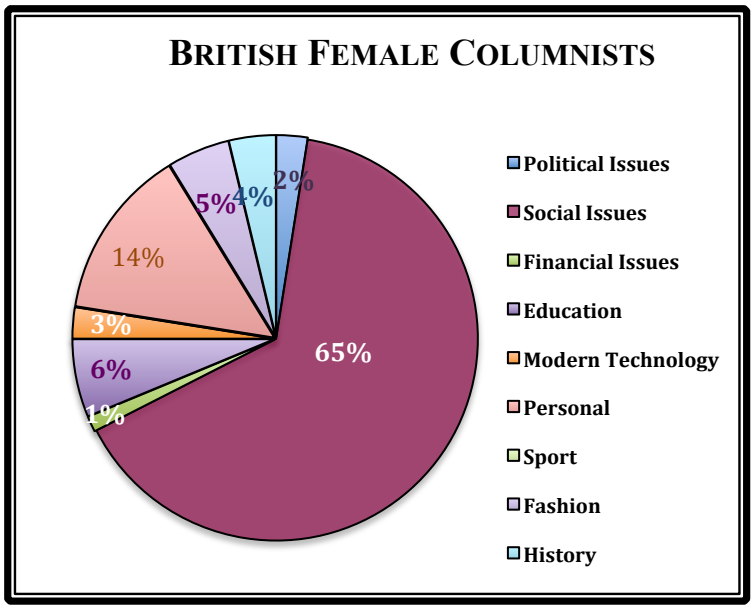


Figure 38. Distribution of Topics in British Females' Columns

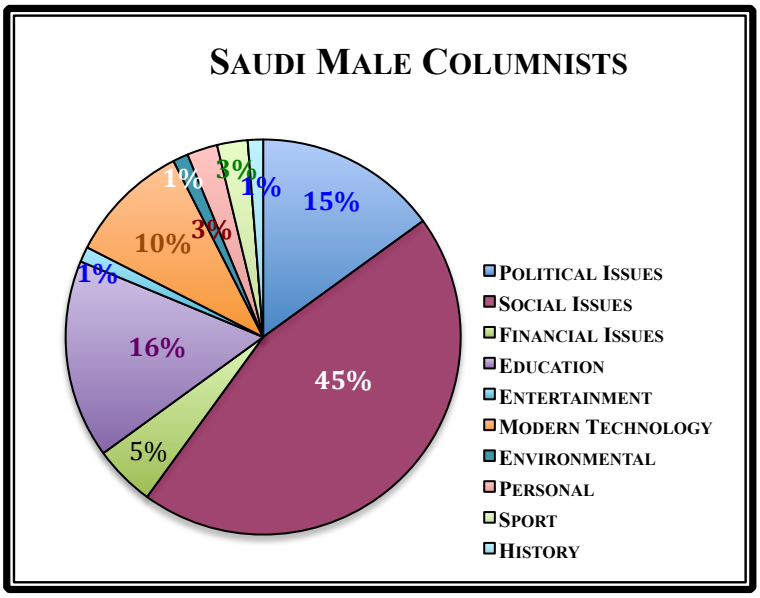


Figure 39. Distribution of Topics in Saudi Males' Columns

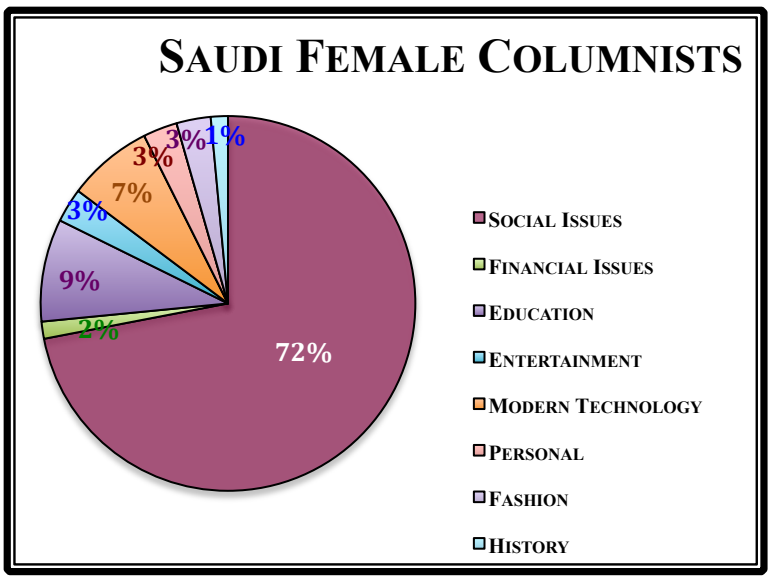


Figure 40. Distribution of Topics in Saudi Females' Columns

A comparison of topic choice by gender in the British corpus revealed that female and male writers differed significantly in their opinion columns. Men's columns covered more political issues (**27%**), more financial issues (**5%**), and more topics related to entertainment (**6.25%**), modern technology (**8.75%**), environment (**3.75%**), and sport (**2.5%**). In contrast, women's columns covered more social topics (**65%**), and presented more personal experience (**13.75%**). Men and women columnists showed an identical number of topics discussing education (**6.25%**) and history (**3.75%**). In terms of social issues, male and female columnists produced different pieces dealing with various social issues. Men wrote about *smoking; housing crisis; slavery; food banking* and *drugs* as the following table shows:

Table 60. *Social Issues in British Men's Opinion Columns*

Topics	***Headlines***
Smoking	*- Let's not rest until we've stubbed out smoking* *- Only Neanderthals smoke with kids in the car*
Housing	*- If buying a home is bad, renting is far worse* *- Housing crisis? No, just a very British sickness* *- We need more homes, not easier mortgages*
Miscellaneous	*- Ban all dogs now. Whether or not they bite* *- Beware turning drug dealers into folk heroes* *- Half a million Britons using food banks. What kind of country is this becoming?*

As it can be seen from the above examples that male writers in the 80 columns covered a wide selection of social topics, but none of these topics was associated with femininity. On the other hand, female writers addressed feminine topics and other issues deemed of particular interest to women as the following headlines prove:

- *Why is Abortion Under Threat Again*
- *Rape is Violence, Pure and Simple*
- *Why are There So Few Women on TV?*
- *I wish I'd Had The Birth of My Child Filmed*
- *Older Mothers aren't Freaks*

- *False Positive Pregnancy Tests*
- *All Women Gain From Feminism*
- *Female Equality Needs Doughtier Defenders*
- *Having Or Not Having Children should Not Define or Divide Women*
- *False Feminists Want to Make Abortion Harder*
- *How to Be A Good Mother*
- *High Heels Always Leave Me with a Low Feeling*
- *The Point of Moisturiser is to Make you Feel Good – not Look Younger*

In addition, British female columnists have shared intimate moments and personal events in their own lives with their readers. A quarter of columns (25%) relied into personal stories and anecdotes as the following extracts show:

- "When I was a child, my father delighted in telling me how different his childhood was to ours. The main disparity seemed to be how many of he and his siblings' leisure activities involved either chasing rats or shooting each other in the softer body parts with air rifles – but, even at the time, I remember thinking, "There will never be a greater generational gap than the one between my grandparents and their boomer children, i.e., my father".

(*Why My Children's Generation is Superior* By **Caitlin Moran**)

- "My mother was treated as a medical freak when she became pregnant with her first — and only — baby at 40. Her entirely normal pregnancy was punctuated by grave voices saying "given your age . . ." and she was dispatched to a far-away specialist maternity hospital to give birth. As a child I found it embarrassing on holiday when kids on the beach assumed my grey-haired father was my grandad. My friends' mothers were in their twenties or thirties, they liked, or at least tolerated, the punk and New Romantic music we loved. My parents, forged by the war, preferred Glenn Miller".

(*Older Mothers Aren't Freaks, They're Fabulous* By **Janice Turner**)

- I write a lot about Mum in the paper – how she won't let us sit on the sofa after she's bumphled the cushions; her 18 different stages for folding towels; how we call her the Noisemaker 2000 because in the aforementioned 70 years she's never had an unexpressed thought or met an episode of Coronation Street she couldn't improve with a running commentary about how it compared with the one in which Ken Barlow's wife was electrocuted by her own hairdryer in 1971; how she wouldn't let us have a drink with soup.

(I'd Like to Say A Few Words About Mum By **Lucy Mangan**)

Comparing Saudi male and female writers in terms of topic choice also revealed that the topics they write about are diverse. Male writers addressed more political issues (**15%**), more financial issues (**5%**), and more topics related to education (1**6.25%**), modern technology (**10%**), and sport (**2.5%**). In contrast, female writers chose to communicate to other women through writing about feminine topics and sharing their experiences in Saudi society. Women covered more social issues **(76.25%)**, most of them are of a direct connection with femininity.

Regarding social issues, Saudi male writers write about Saudi society in most of the columns, address local concerns, and criticize social practices and norms as the following headlines illustrate:

- *A society that loves violations!*
- *Prompting laughter in society*
- *Saudi Arabia and its people are reactive not proactive*
- *Saudi unemployment: A ticking time bomb*
- *Saudization: Rights and responsibilities*
- *No place for corruption in Saudi Arabia*
- *Concrete steps must to check gender crimes*

Likewise, Saudi female writers also reflect Saudi society in their writing, but they frequently engage in feminine topics and concerns. "Female Saudi columnists write first about their own 'feminine' concerns and second about wider issues, international affairs, or local-non feminine topics" (Al-Rasheed, 2013, p.209). Women in the Saudi corpus are often addressing women in Saudi society. They are mainly writing about issues that touch only women such as marriage, education, employment, children, women's travel, women's rights, women's health, women's driving, and all other subjects considered feminine. Results showed that out of the **80** columns analyzed, there are **48** columns discussing women's issues, comprising (**60%)** of female columns as the following headlines display:

- *Women Have Had Enough Discrimination*
- *Calls For a Ministry to Empower Women*
- *Let Women Drive For The Safety and Welfare Of Their Families*
- *When Women Can Watch But Not Take Part*
- *Women Seek Reforms To End Inheritance Injustices*
- *Society Must Show Compassion Toward Female Ex-Prisoners*
- *A Call For Men to Take A Stance To Stop Violence Against Women*
- *Are Saudi Women Doing Enough to End Discrimination Against Them?*
- *Domestic Violence Is More Than Just A Black Eye*
- *Can political Involvement of Women Influence Change?*
- *Let Woman Decide How To Deal With Her Health Issues*

Women Driving and *Domestic Violence* are some of the most controversial topics still dominating Saudi press. Both men and women writers addressed these two social issues in their opinion columns as the following extracts demonstrate:

- In Saudi Arabia one in every six women is abused verbally, physically or emotionally every day, 90 percent of abusers are men, usually husbands or fathers. According to research conducted by the National Family Safety Program, women are not aware of their rights and men violate religious teachings and follow aberrant customs and traditions.

(*A Call For Men to Take A Stance to Stop Violence* by **Samar Fatany,** a Saudi Female Writer**)**

- This means we are faced with a phenomenal problem that needs immediate, strong and comprehensive response. The law against domestic violence that was passed by the Council of Ministers recently is a historical step in the right direction. However, we do need social, societal and psychological studies that explain the problem and explore the solutions. We need to change attitudes and underlying convictions in hearts and minds.

(*Domestic Violence: Our Unspoken Problem!* by **Dr. Khaled M Batarfi,** a Saudi Male Writer**)**

- There is a lot of confusion surrounding the dilemma of the ban on women driving in Saudi Arabia. Conservatives view it as a religious concern; while government officials claim it to be a cultural matter and that society should decide if and when. On the other hand, many see it as a necessity and intellectuals say that there has to be new judicial legislation that will stop the ban, mistreatment or imprisonment of women if they start driving on Saudi roads.

(*Seeking the Right to Drive From Abroad by* **Mohammed AlSaif,** a Saudi Male Writer**)**

- It is truly a thorny issue because it is similar to the mystery of whether the egg or the chicken came first. How can you issue a violation permit against a citizen for not having a driver's license when your institution does not allow the said individual to attain one in the first place and when your institution does not open a driving school for the person? What if a woman carries a Gulf or Arab or international driver's license? It is truly "of course" a thorny issue.

(*Women Driving in Saudi Arabia: Forever a Thorny Issue* by **Badria Al-Bishr,** a Saudi Female Writer**)**

In sum, men and women columnists of both groups presented a wide diversity of subjects and writing styles. In spite of this, women columnists have shared topics and experiences that differ extensively from those of men. Men columnists write about wider issues, international affairs, and other masculine topics including politics, crime, and finance. In contrast, women columnists are often relegated to write about traditionally feminine topics, including parenting, fashion, and domesticity. These results corresponded to previous research (Tannen,1990 ;Bischoping, 1993; Fehr, 1996; Soler, 2004) which confirmed a clear pattern of gender difference in topic preferences.

6.10. Gender Differences in Writing Style

Style of writing is another aspect in which gender differences have been reported. Writing style is an essential element through which columnists are capable of attracting the attention and sustaining the readers' interest. Columnists present their ideas in a narrative style, as an essay, a straight presentation of information, an argumentative analysis (Curry, 1990). In printed journalism, there are some types of journalistic style including: *the inverted pyramid style*, *the narrative style* and *the hourglass style*. The inverted pyramid style refers to a common method in journalism in which the most important information and facts are presented first (Sterling, 2009). It suits objectivity because it encourages an impersonal writing style focused on fact (Ward, 2004). The narrative style is a storytelling style. Narrative storytelling is "engaging, creative, and compelling" (Lynch, 2012, p.220). The hourglass style is a combination of the narrative and the inverted pyramid styles (Lynch, 2012).

The results obtained from the analysis confirmed that columnists of both groups have used a variety of styles including the ones mentioned above. The analysis also

revealed that there are some gender differences with women preferring more narrative and personal style in their opinion columns as Table (61) and Figure (41) illustrate:

Table 61. *Writing Style of British and Saudi Opinion Columnists*

Writing Style	*British Columnists*		*Saudi Columnists*	
	Male	***Female***	***Male***	***Female***
Inverted Pyramid *(informational +Factual)*	69 (86.25%)	34 (42.5%)	68 (85%)	39 (48.75%)
Hourglass *(Informational + Personal)*	11 (13.75%)	32 (40%)	10 (12.25%)	28 (35%)
Narrative *(Personal)*	0	14 (17.5%)	2 (2.5%)	13 (16.25%)

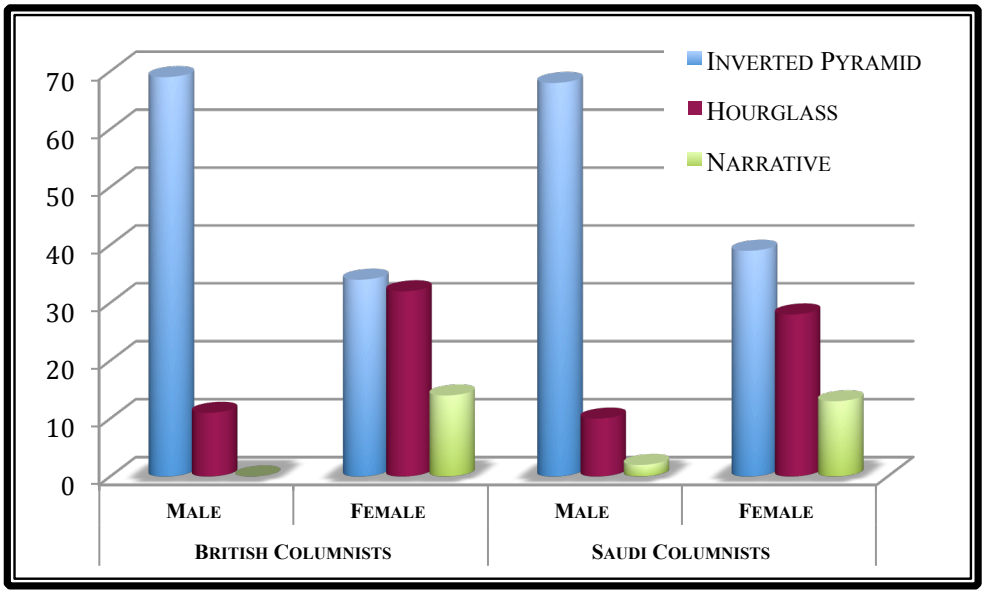


Figure 41. Distribution of Writing Style in British and Saudi Corpus

The results presented in the above table regarding the writing style of columnists indicate that there is a gender difference between men and women writers. Most of the columns of British male writers were written in an informative factual style. Actually, **69** of men's columns (86.25%) were a direct presentation of information as they relied on objective facts, statistics, and studies. Men writers combine information with personal experience in only **11** columns. This finding shows that men writers in the British corpus adopt overwhelmingly informative and factual style in their writing. An

example of a column in which the writer adopts the informational style, is a column by *John Harris* on *Food Banks*, he wrote:

- Half a million people are now accustomed to using food banks, and according to a report by Oxfam and Church Action on Poverty, the UK is now facing "destitution, hardship and hunger on a large scale". According the Trussell Trust, the UK's single biggest organiser of food banks, in 2011-12, the number of people who received at least three days' emergency food was around 130,000. Their own informational material says that in 2012-13, "food banks fed 346,992 people nationwide", and of those who received help, "126,889 were children".

In contrast, women writers used a variety of styles in their opinion columns. Results showed that (42.5%) of columns relied on information and facts, (40%) of columns combined information with personal experience, and (17.5%) of columns relied on personal anecdotes. Women writers tended also to include personal details in their columns more frequently than men writers. An example of a column contained personal details written by *Caitlin Moran* on *Food:*

- I took over the family cooking when I was 11. My mother was always pregnant, and my dad could only cook two things: gammon, and a beef curry so hot no one could eat it – I once heard him, in the kitchen, actually scream when he tasted it. So I had free rein in the kitchen, to experiment with the full gamut of beige ingredients available to me. An 11-year-old will come up with amazing recipes: I once invented the Spaghetti Pancake, which was a load of leftover spaghetti, cooked in batter. Imagine a Frisbee of pure gluten. It was less appealing than that. I also invented boiling and then deep-frying potatoes – served with tinned saveloy sausages, the plate looked like the plate of clotted arteries it was so efficiently creating.

Similar findings were found in the Saudi corpus, with men writers adopting a more informative style and women writers writing from a personal perspective. Men writers relied on presenting facts and information in **68 (85%)** columns, wrote about personal anecdotes in only **2 (2.5%)** columns, and relied on in a combination of the two in **10 (12.25%)** columns. The following extract from an opinion piece by Mahmoud Ahmad on violating society's rules and regulations illustrates how the writer relied on information and statistics to support his opinion:

- Is it me, or has everyone else come to this horrible conclusion that we are a society that does not respect rules and regulations. We have developed a scary reputation, both within and outside the Kingdom, that we are a society that loves to break rules, especially those of our country. The director general of traffic in Saudi Arabia, Gen. Suleiman Al-Ajlan, revealed horrifying statistics. In 2011, more than 500,000 accidents took place, killing more than 7,000 people. More than 40,000 people were injured in these accidents. Are we proud of these numbers? According to a report published in 2009, the Kingdom witnessed more than 4.3 million car accidents in the last 19 years that killed around 86,000 and injured more than 600,000. Alarming statistics, but cold facts that we need to assimilate.

Saudi female writers, similar to British women, have used a variety of styles including the personal and the informative. The inverted pyramid style was used in **36** (48.75%) columns, the hourglass in **28** (35%) columns, and the narrative in **13** (16.25%) columns. In half of the columns (51.25%), female writers relied on personal anecdotes and drew on their personal experience to support their opinion. The following extracts from women's columns show the extensive use of personal accounts in female's writing:

- After a usual hectic day I was on my way back home by tram. I was completely occupied with the thoughts of usual student-mom rituals like how to meet deadlines, what to cook for dinner, who is going to iron school uniforms etc. I just felt like getting off the tram and escape somewhere I could find some peace away from the entire hubbub. As usual I did not respond to the temptation and just got off the tram. As I was heading toward my house, I heard a faint voice calling for help.

(*Memoirs of A Saudi PhD Student: Age Doesn't Matter* by **Hatoon Kadi**)

- Not long ago in London, I went into a great big building on Oxford Street, a spanking new shop that was pulling in crowds of customers. I'd heard of the brand, friends had told me how amazingly cheap it was, that it was a good place to buy everyday essentials, like socks or T-shirts, and that the quality was good enough, not fabulous, but at those prices what do you expect? And indeed the prices were very low. I stood staring at a dress that cost £10. It really wasn't bad, the fabric was 100 percent cotton, the cut was decent enough, the stitching seemed okay. It was just a regular dress, not that different from similar dresses sold in other stores in the same street for twice the price. There were jeans for £13 and t-shirts for £4; you could buy yourself a whole new wardrobe for a £100. No wonder the queues at the till were so long!

(*Buying responsibly* by **Imane Kurdi**)

In short, all the columnists in this study produce their writing with clarity of thought and they were able to communicate their message clearly and simply. They have used different styles with clear and simple language and a rare use of literary language. Men columnists in both groups tended to use informative style and relied on facts and verifiable information in their writing about public affairs and international concerns. In contrast, women columnists in both groups wrote with an intensely personal style about current affairs and feminine topics. These findings provide evidence and correspond to previous studies (Aries & Johnson, 1983; Tannen, 1990; Herring & Paolillo, 2006) which pointed out that men tend to write about facts and women prefer to write about personal feelings and relations.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter presented the results of the quantitative investigation of gender-based differences in the use of selected linguistic features among British and Saudi opinion columnists. The results indicated that there are some significant gender differences between male and female columnists especially in the use of adjectives, personal pronouns, and gender nouns with female writers in both groups using a higher frequency of these linguistic features in their opinion columns. Results also revealed that gender of the columnist influences topic choice, with male writers choosing topics associated with politics, economy, science and modern technology, and sport; whereas female writers favoring parenting, fashion, travel, home and domestic life. The following chapter will present the results of the use of metadiscoursal resources in British and Saudi articles and will compare the two groups of writers according to cross-linguistic and cross-cultural preferences.

VII. Chapter Seven

Results & Findings

CULTURAL VARIATION IN THE USE OF METADISCOURSE

*"**Being a columnist is the most worthy** profession,"* says syndicated columnist Suzette Martinez Standring. *"You devote your writing life to helping readers understand the world around them a little better and to change that part of the world your writing reaches. The types of columns possible are only limited to your imagination and it is the only form of journalism where individuality is prized"*

(Ferguson, 2010, p. 33)

7.0. Introduction

This chapter explores the distribution of metadiscourse devices as used by British and Saudi columnists in newspaper opinion columns. The concept of metadiscourse is used as a means to identify possible differences or similarities between the opinion articles of British and Saudi writers. The analysis examined the use of these devices in 320 columns, and the results have been standardized to a common basis (means per 1000 words) to compare the frequency of occurrence. In addition, the majority of results presented in this chapter have been tested for statistical significance, using Pearson's Chi-Square test. Statistical findings indicate significant differences between the two groups of writers regarding the use of most of the subcategories of metadiscourse devices, and results confirmed that metadiscourse is a key feature of newspaper opinion columns.

This chapter also presents the results of the comparative analysis between British and Saudi opinion columns in terms of text layout and format, topic choice, and style of writing. Findings revealed that writers tended to have cultural preferences in their opinion texts, with British writers using more colloquialisms and Saudi writers using more cultural terms. The comparative analysis also investigated the structure of headlines, selected linguistic features, and the use of rhetorical devices in the corpus. Findings reported some observations of difference between British and Saudi writers in the use of these linguistic and stylistic features.

The chapter ends with a concluding section summing up the main findings of the comparative analysis between British and Saudi writers regarding the use of metadiscourse resources and other linguistic and stylistic features in their texts.

7.1. Results

- ***Distribution of Metadiscourse Resources in Opinion Columns of British and Saudi Writers***

Speaking generally, the quantitative investigation of metadiscourse devices in the journalistic discourse of opinion texts in the whole corpus revealed that there are **33,854** metadiscourse tokens in **273,773** words. That means there are **3** elements of metadiscourse in every **25** words in each of the two corpora: British and Saudi. This result provides evidence that the general use of metadiscourse in newspaper opinion columns between native and non-native writers of English is almost identical as the Table (62) displays:

Table 62. *Frequency of Metadiscourse in British and Saudi Opinion Texts*

Opinion Texts		*Total Words*	*Metadiscourse Frequency*	*F Per 1000 Words*	*Percentage*
British	160	154773	19229	124.240	12.35%
Saudi	160	119000	14625	122.899	12.28%
Total	**320**	**273773**	**33854**	**123.291**	**12.32%**

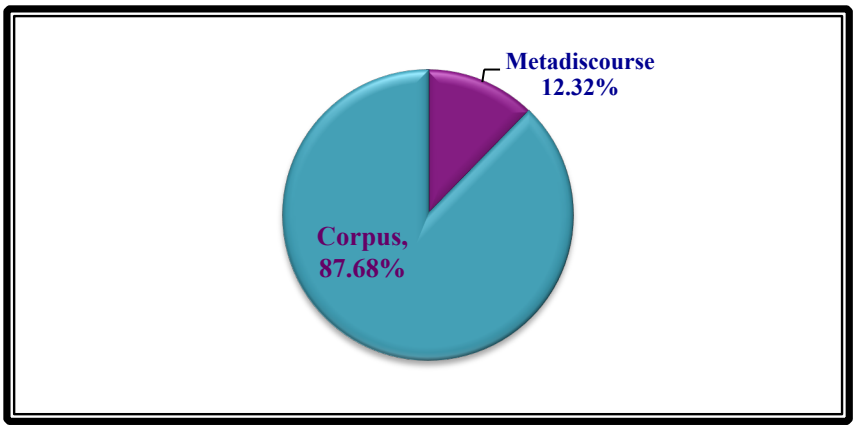


Figure 42. General Frequency of Metadiscourse in the Corpus

The general findings from this study also revealed that both groups of writers used all the categories of metadiscourse resources in the genre of newspaper opinion columns. Both British and Saudi writers have made high use of these devices in their articles. A total of **19229** (124.240 *per 1000 words*) metadiscourse devices were identified in the British corpus, and a total of **14625** (122.899 *per 1000 words*) metadiscourse devices were found in the Saudi corpus. These results showed that British and Saudi texts showed an almost identical number of interactive and interactional metadiscourse resources per 1000 words (British, n=124.240; Saudi, n=122.899). Despite this similarity, there were some differences in the use of sub-categories of metadiscourse. The analysis also showed that British writers employed far more interactional than interactive metadiscourse, whereas Saudi writers had a higher density of interactive metadiscourse than interactional metadiscourse. The overall distribution of metadiscourse resources in both corpora is summarized in Table (63) and Fig. (43).

Table 63. *Frequency of Metadiscourse Resources in British and Saudi Columns*

Metadiscourse Resources	***British Columnists***	***F Per 1000 Words***	***Saudi Columnists***	***F Per 1000 Words***
Interactive Resources	8335 (43.57%)	53.853	7628 (52.12%)	64.100
Interactional Resources	10894 (56.65%)	69.740	6997 (47.84%)	58.798
Total	**19229**	**124.240**	**14625**	**122.899**

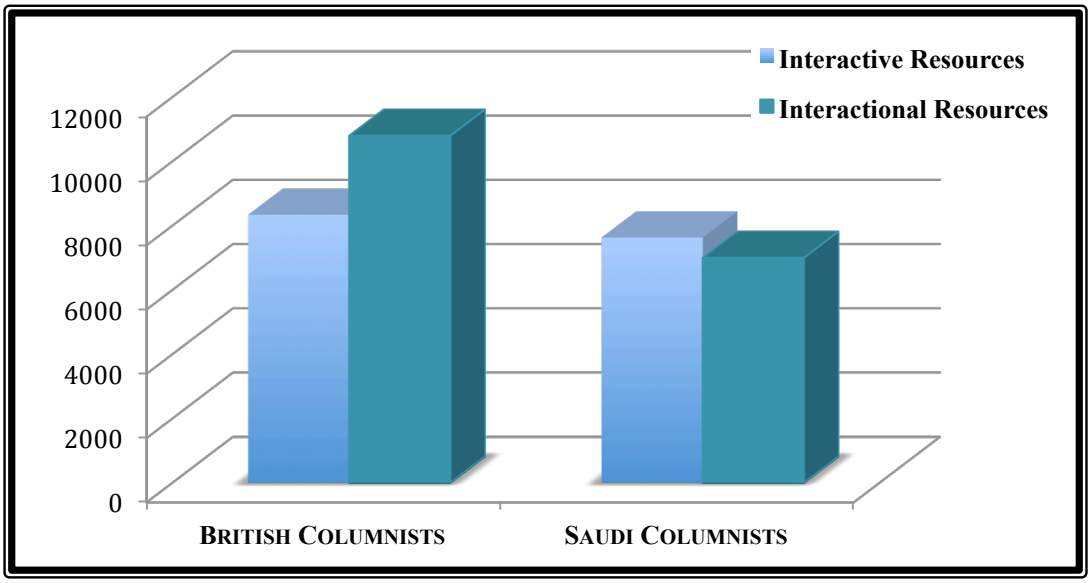


Figure 43. Distribution of Metadiscourse Resources in British and Saudi Opinion Texts

In spite of the similarity in normalized results, the results of the Chi-Square test at α=0.05 with one degree of freedom (DF= 1) indicated that differences between British and Saudi columnists regarding the use of both interactive and interactional metadiscourse resources were statistically significant as shown in Table (64).

Table 64. ***Results of Chi-test of British and Saudi Columnists' Use of MD Devices***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	1	199.042	3.12	$X^2 < 3.84$
N of Valid Cases	33754			

Level of Significance = 3.84

The following sections present a detailed analysis of the results of the main categories of metadiscourse: interactive and interactional along with their sub-categories in the corpus of both writers: British and Saudi.

7.1.1. Interactive Resources

Interactive resources represent the first main category of Hyland's (2005) taxonomy of metadiscourse as mentioned before in the previous chapters. Interactive resources refer to linguistic features that are used to assist writers in organizing texts and help to guide readers through the text. These features "are concerned with ways of organizing discourse to anticipate readers' knowledge and reflect the writer's assessment of what needs to be made explicit to constrain and guide what can be recovered from the text" (Hyland, 2010, p.128). Hyland's (2005a), distinguished five main categories of interactive metadiscourse resources: *Transitions, Frame markers, Endophoric markers, Evidentials,* and *Code glosses*. All these sub-categories have been investigated in both corpora as summarized in Table (65) and displayed in Fig. (44).

Table 65. *Frequency of Interactive Resources in British and Saudi Opinion Texts*

Interactive Resources	***British Columnists***	***Percentage***	***F Per 1000 Words***	***Saudi Columnists***	***Percentage***	***F Per 1000 Words***
Transition Markers	6711	81%	43.360	6101	80%	51.268
Frame Markers	946	11%	6.112	512	7%	4.302
Endophoric markers	26	0.3%	0.167	30	0.3%	0.252
Evidential Markers	265	3 %	1.712	138	2%	1.159
Code Glosses	387	5%	2.500	847	11%	7.117
Total	**8335**	**52.21%**	**53.853**	**7628**	**47.78%**	**64.100**

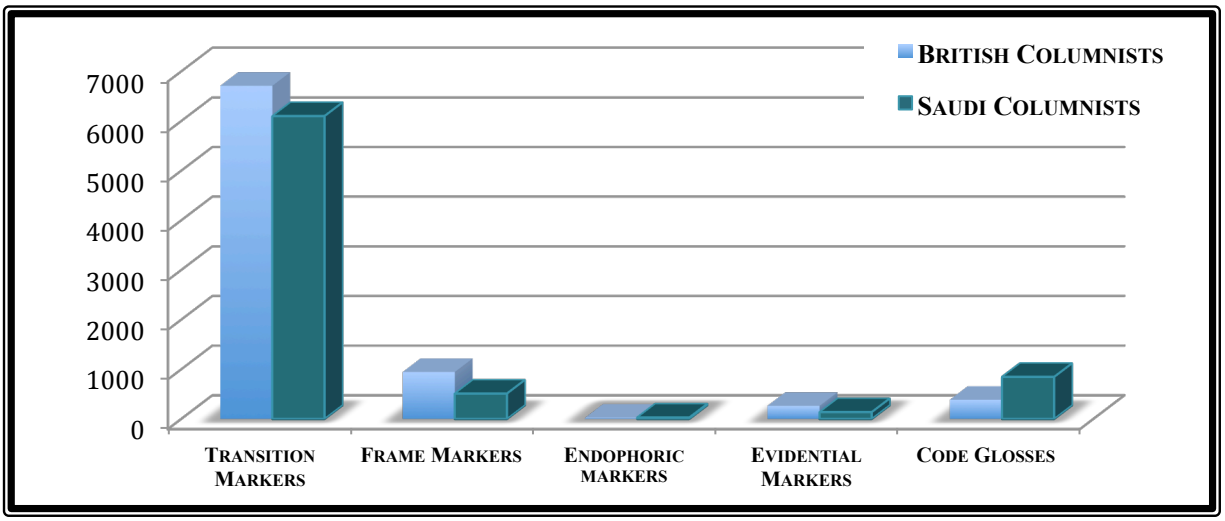


Figure 44. Distribution of Interactive Resources in British and Saudi Opinion Texts

Regarding the distribution of the sub-categories of interactive metadiscourse in the articles of British and Saudi writers, results showed that both groups of writers have made use of all the subcategories of interactive metadiscourse. Both groups of writers have made a frequent use of transition markers, frame markers, and code glosses. The remaining sub-categories (endophoric markers and evidential markers) display a low frequency of occurrence in the articles investigated in both British and Saudi texts as shown in Figures (45) and (46).

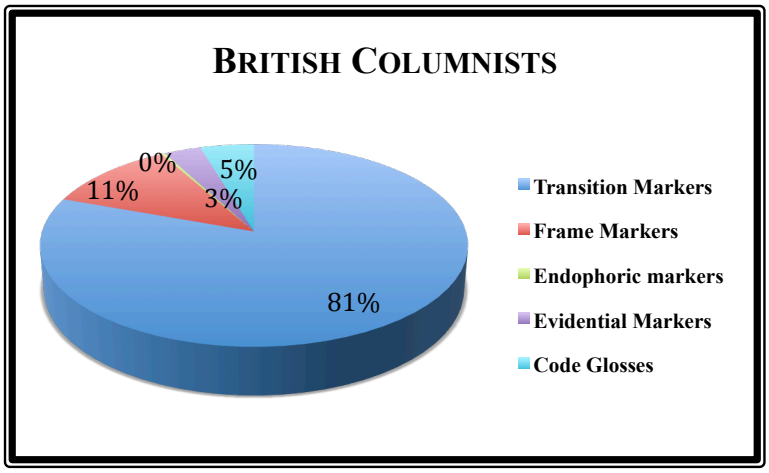


Figure 45. Percentage of Interactive Resources in British Corpus

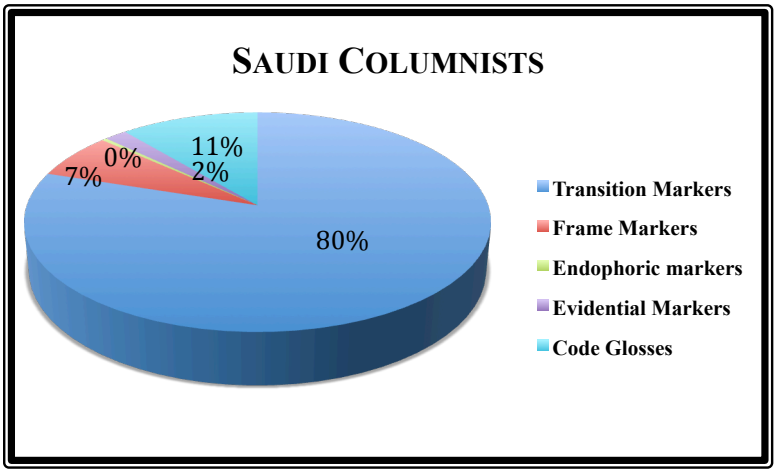


Figure 46. Percentage of Interactive Resources in Saudi Corpus

Normalized results revealed that both writers showed a close similarity in the frequency of *frame markers, endophoric markers*, and *evidential markers*. They also showed that Saudi writers use a higher number of *transition markers* and *code glosses*. In order to test the significance of difference between British and Saudi columnists regarding the use of interactive resources, the Chi-Square test was also used. In Table (66), the Chi-Square value (X^2 =339.366) is meaningful at α level (α = 0.05) with a degree of freedom of 4 (DF=4). This indicates that there is a highly statistically significant difference between Saudi and British in their use of interactive resources, with British writers using more interactive resources than Saudi writers.

Table 66. ***Results of Chi-test of British and Saudi Columnists' Use of Interactive Resources***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	4	339.366	3.46	**X^2 < 9.49**
N of Valid Cases	15963			

Level of Significance = 9.49

The following sections present a detailed presentation of the results of the five main categories of interactive metadiscourse resources in the corpus of both columnists.

A. Transition Markers

Transition markers refer to conjunctions, conjunctives, and adverbial phrases that are used to express semantic relations between main clauses and mark additive, contrastive, and consequential steps in a text. Transitions represent the most frequent sub-category in the corpus, which comprise 80% of all the interactive resources. Both groups of writers have made a higher use of transitions in comparison to other interactive metadiscourse markers. British writers have used these transition devices in a similar frequency to their Saudi counterparts. There are 6711 (43 *per 1000 words*) transition markers in the British

corpus, and there are 6101 (51 *per 1000 words*) in the Saudi corpus. On a closer examination, the analysis reveals that additive markers are the most frequent transition markers in both groups, with British writers employ them **4162** times (26 *per 1000 words*) and Saudi writers use them **4507** times (37 *per 1000 words*). These results showed Saudi writers preferring more additive markers and British writers favouring more transition markers signaling limitation and contradiction. Saudi writers have used a higher frequency of additive markers in their opinion texts than did British writers and this may be due to a mother-tongue influence, because in Arabic additive markers especially conjunctions are always used between words, phrases, and sentences and Arabic texts relied heavily on additive markers. The following table and chart display the distribution of transition markers in the corpus:

Table 67. *Frequency of Transition Markers in British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

Transition Markers	***British Columnists***	***Percentage***	***F Per 1000 Words***	***Saudi Columnists***	***Percentage***	***F Per 1000 Words***
Addition	4162	62%	26.890	4507	73%	37. 873
Causation	711	10%	4.593	480	8%	4.033
Limitation / Contradiction	1695	25%	10.951	962	16%	8.084
Time/sequence	84	2%	0.542	13	0.21%	0.109
Consequence	28	0.41%	0.180	117	2%	1.092
Comparison	31	0.46%	0.200	22	0.36%	0.184
Total	**6711**	**52.38%**	**43.360**	**6101**	**47.61%**	**51.378**

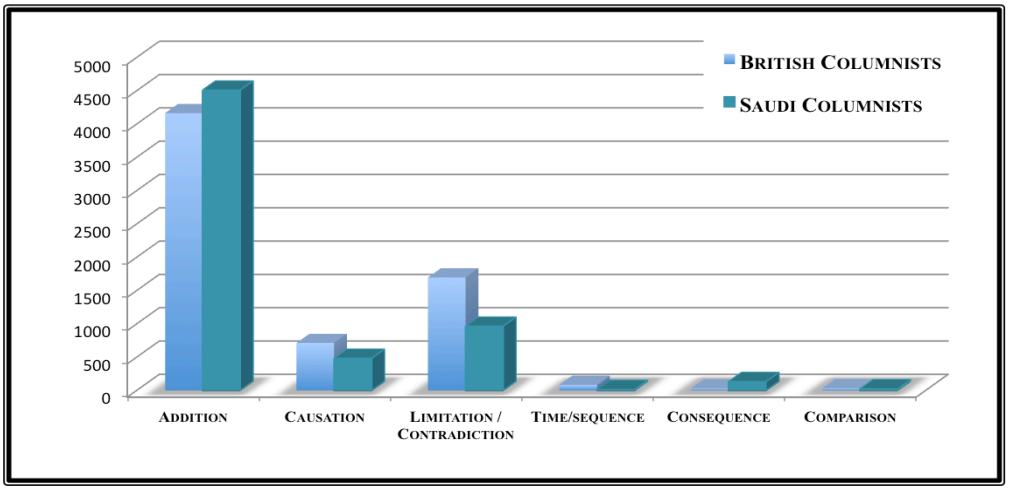


Figure 47. Distribution of Transition Markers in British and Saudi Opinion Texts

To know about existing significant differences between British and Saudi columnists in their use of transition markers a Chi-Square test was calculated for these devices as shown in Table (68). The results of the Chi-Square test at α=0.05 with a degree of freedom of 5 (DF=5) indicated that differences between the two groups under study in the use of transition markers were statistically different.

Table 68. ***Results of Chi-test of British and Saudi Columnists' Use of Transition Mkrs***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	5	353.120	3.726	**X^2 < 11.07**
N of Valid Cases	12812			

Level of Significance = 11.07

B. Frame Markers

Frame markers are "references to text boundaries or elements of schematic text structure" used to sequence, label stages, and change goals in discourse (Hyland, 2004, p.138). The analysis revealed that both groups of writers have used numerous tokens of frame markers, with British writers using 946 tokens of frame markers (6 *per 1000 words*) and Saudi writers employing 512 tokens of these devices (4 *per 1000 words*) in order to sequence parts of their articles, order their arguments, label stages, shift topics and announce their goals. Using frame markers to signal sequence in the text was the most frequently used category in both corpora. As shown in Table (69) and Fig. (48), British writers made a similar use of frame markers as compared to Saudi writers.

Table 69. *Frequency of Frame Markers in British and Saudi Opinion Texts*

Frame Markers	*British Columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*	*Saudi Columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*
Sequencing	435	46%	2.810	261	51%	2.193
Labeling Stages	339	36%	2.190	119	23%	1
Announcing Goals	123	13%	0.794	101	20%	0.848
Shifting Topic	49	5%	0.316	31	6%	0.260
Total	**946**	**64.88%**	**6.112**	**512**	**35.12%**	**4.302**

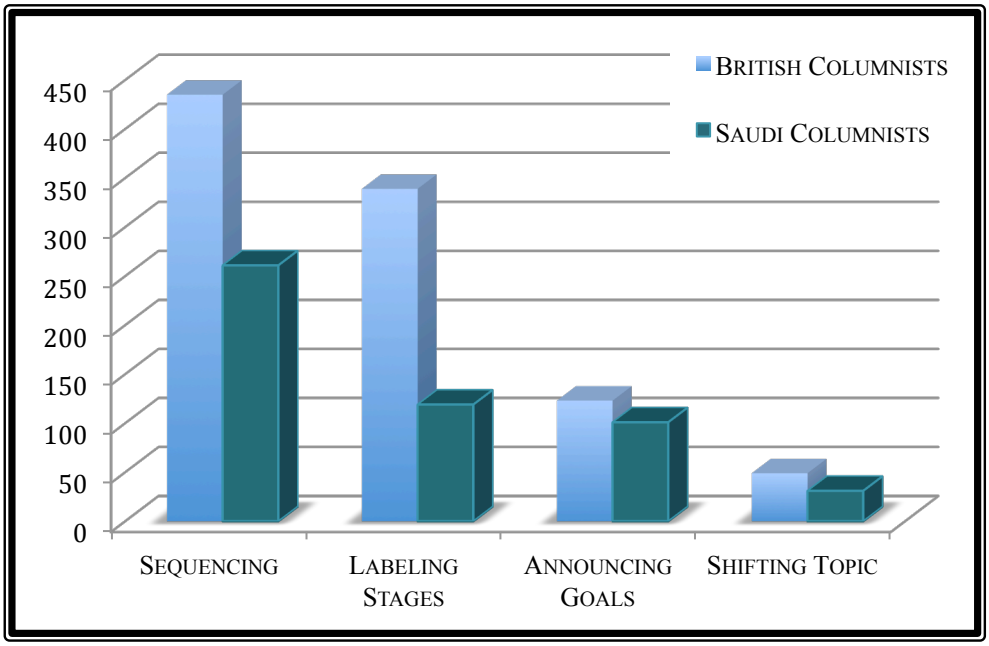


Figure 48. Distribution of Frame Markers in British and Saudi Opinion Texts

As shown in the above figures, the difference between British and Saudi writers in the normalized totals of frame markers is small, with British writers using more frame markers than Saudi. In spite of this, statistical results revealed that this difference is significant (X^2= 28.746 < 7.82). Statistical results showed that the Chi-Squared value at α=0.05 with a degree of freedom of 3 (DF=3) indicated that difference in the frequencies of frame markers in both groups is significant as displayed in Table (70):

Table 70. ***Results of Chi-test of British and Saudi Columnists' Use of Frame Markers***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	3	28.746	2.53	**$X^2 < 7.82$**
N of Valid Cases	1458			

Level of Significance = 7.82

C. Endophoric Markers

Endophoric markers are expressions that refer to information in other parts of a text. They make "additional ideational material salient and therefore available to the reader in aiding the recovery of the writer's meanings, often facilitating comprehension and supporting arguments by referring to earlier material or anticipating something yet to come" (Hyland, 2005a, p.51). The quantitative analysis revealed that the overall frequency of endophoric markers in the whole corpus for both groups of writers was considerably low. A total of 56 tokens of endophoric markers was found in the corpus, with very similar findings for both sets of writers (British, n=26 and Saudi, n=30). Endophoric markers are the least frequently occurring sub-category of interactive metadiscourse markers in both corpora. Statistical results of Chi-Square test, as shown in Table (71), revealed that the value of Chi-Square ($X^2 = 0.751$) is not significant at α level ($\alpha = 0.05$) with one degree of freedom (DF=1). This shows that the difference between British and Saudi writers in the use of endophoric markers is not statistically significant.

Table 71. ***Results of Chi-test of British and Saudi Columnists' Use of Endophoric Markers***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	1	0.751	0.3860	**$X^2 > 3.84$**
N of Valid Cases	56			

D. Evidential Markers

Evidential markers are references to information from other sources outside the text. Evidentials "indicate the external origin of material in the current text and give credence to that material by drawing attention to the credibility of its source" (Hyland, 2005a, p.96). Writers in both groups were more likely to use evidential markers to support their arguments by referring to other sources of information. A comparative look at both British and Saudi writers use of evidential markers shows that British writers demonstrated a higher tendency in using citations, quotations and references to studies, surveys, and reports, as shown in Table (72), but normalized results showed that both writers used an equal number of evidential markers (*1 per 1000 words*). Direct quotations were the most frequently used evidential markers in both corpora.

Table 72. *Frequency of Evidential Markers in British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

Evidential Markers	*British Columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*	*Saudi Columnists*	*Percentage*	*F Per 1000 Words*
According to	33	12.45%	0.21	25	18.11%	0.211
Quotations	181	68.30%	1.169	78	56.52%	0.946
Reference to studies, surveys, reports	51	19.24%	0.329	35	25.36%	0.314
Total	**265**	**65.75%**	**1.712**	**138**	**34.24%**	**1.596**

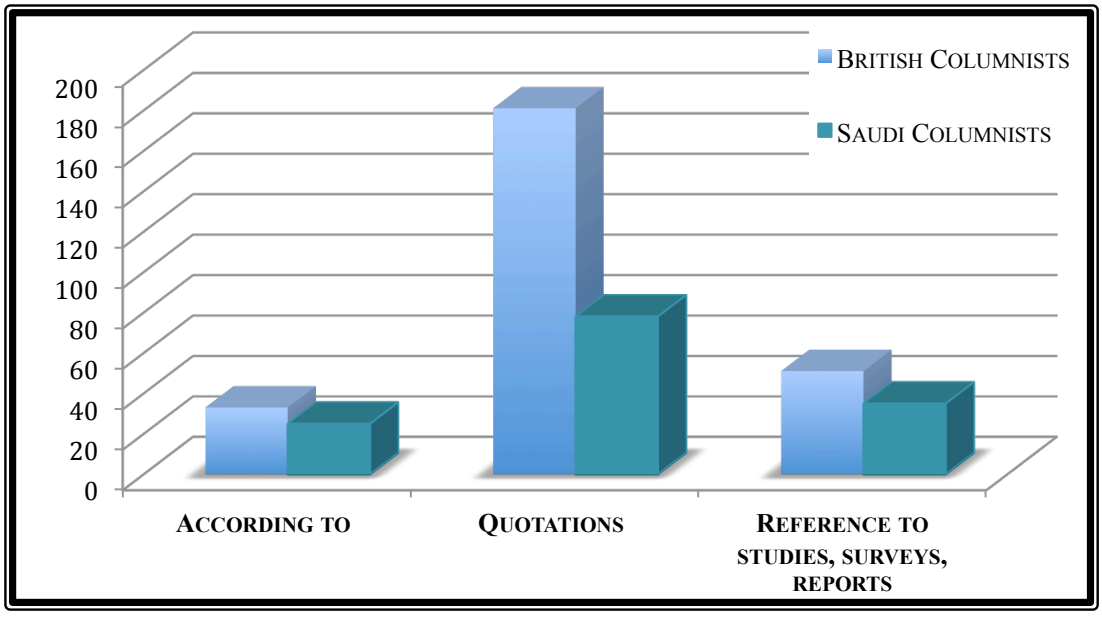


Figure 49. Distribution of Evidential Markers in British and Saudi Opinion

The results of the Chi-Square test at α=0.05 with a degree of freedom of 2 (DF=2) indicated that differences between two groups in the use of evidential markers were not statistically significant as displayed in Table (73).

Table 73. ***Results of Chi-test of British and Saudi Columnists' Use of Evidential Mkrs***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	2	5.572	0.06	$X^2 > 5.99$
N of Valid Cases	403			

E. Code Glosses

Code glosses are textual devices that "supply additional information by rephrasing, explaining or elaborating what has been said to ensure the reader to recover the writer's intended meaning" (Hyland, 2005a, p.52). Regarding the use of code glosses, findings displayed significant difference with the Saudi writers using these devices much more frequently than do their British counterparts. Saudi writers have used **847** tokens of these elaboration devices (7 *per 1000 words*), whereas British writers have used **387** tokens of code glosses in their articles (2 *per 1000 words*). Saudi writers, as displayed in Table (74) and Fig. (50), have used more code glosses to restate or elaborate their messages, while British writers have used more code glosses to support their texts with examples.

Table 74. *Frequency of Code Glosses in British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

Code Glosses	***British Columnists***	***Percentage***	***F Per 1000 Words***	***Saudi Columnists***	***Percentage***	***F Per 1000 Words***
Reformulation	294	76%	1.899	772	92%	6.487
Exemplification	93	24%	0.600	75	8%	0.630
Total	**387**	**31.36%**	**2.500**	**847**	**68.63%**	**7.117**

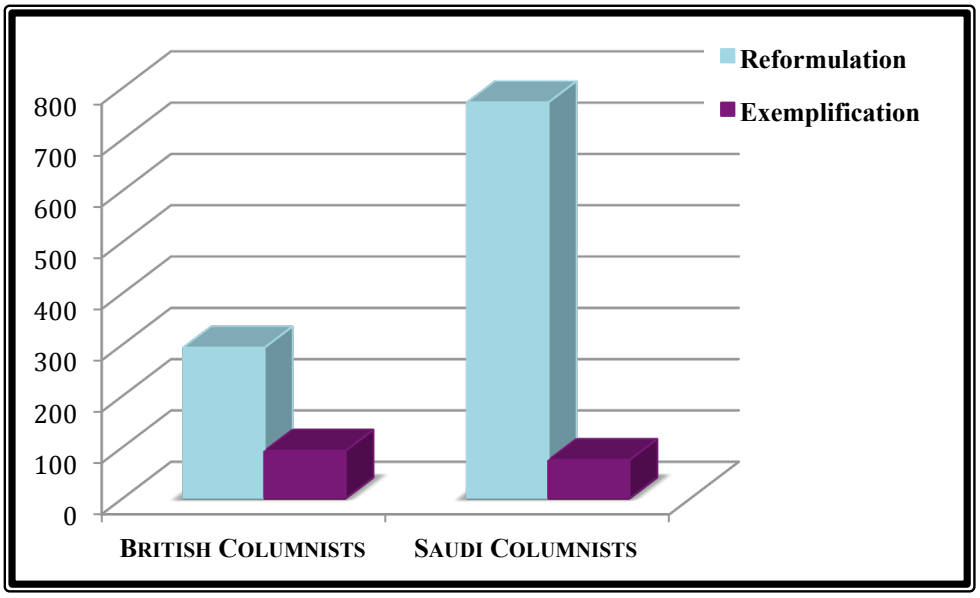


Figure 50. Distribution of Code Glosses in British and Saudi Opinion

Statistical findings revealed that the difference of use of code glosses between British and Saudi writers is statistically significant (X^2= 52.020 < 3.84), as shown in Table (75). This confirmed that Saudi writers used a higher frequency of code glosses than British counterparts in their opinion articles.

Table 75. ***Results of Chi-test of British and Saudi Columnists' Use of Code Glosses***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	1	52.020	5.493	**X^2 < 3.84**
N of Valid Cases	**1234**			

Level of Significance = 3.84

7.1.2. Interactional Resources

Interactional resources is the second main category of Hyland (2005) classification of metadiscourse. Interactional resources refer to the various devices which writers use to involve readers in their texts. These devices "focus on the participants of the interaction and seek to display the writer's persona and a tenor consistent with the norms of the

disciplinary community" (Hyland, 2010, p.129). Interactional resources include five sub-categories: *Hedges*, *Boosters*, *Attitude Markers*, *Self-mentions*, and *Engagement Markers*. The analysis of the corpus showed that all these sub-categories of interactional resources of metadiscourse were present in the writing of both groups of writers as displayed in Table (76) and Fig. (51).

Table 76. *Frequency of Interactional Resources in British and Saudi Opinion Texts*

Interactional Resources	***British Columnists***	***Percentage***	***F Per 1000 Words***	***Saudi Columnists***	***Percentage***	***F Per 1000 Words***
Hedges	2870	26%	18.543	1896	27%	15.932
Boosters	1635	15%	10.563	907	13%	7.621
Attitude markers	265	2%	1.712	288	4%	2.420
Self mentions	3225	30%	20.836	2157	31%	18.126
Engagement Markers	2899	27%	18.730	1749	25%	14.697
Total	**10894**	**60.89%**	**69.740**	**6997**	**39.10%**	**58.789**

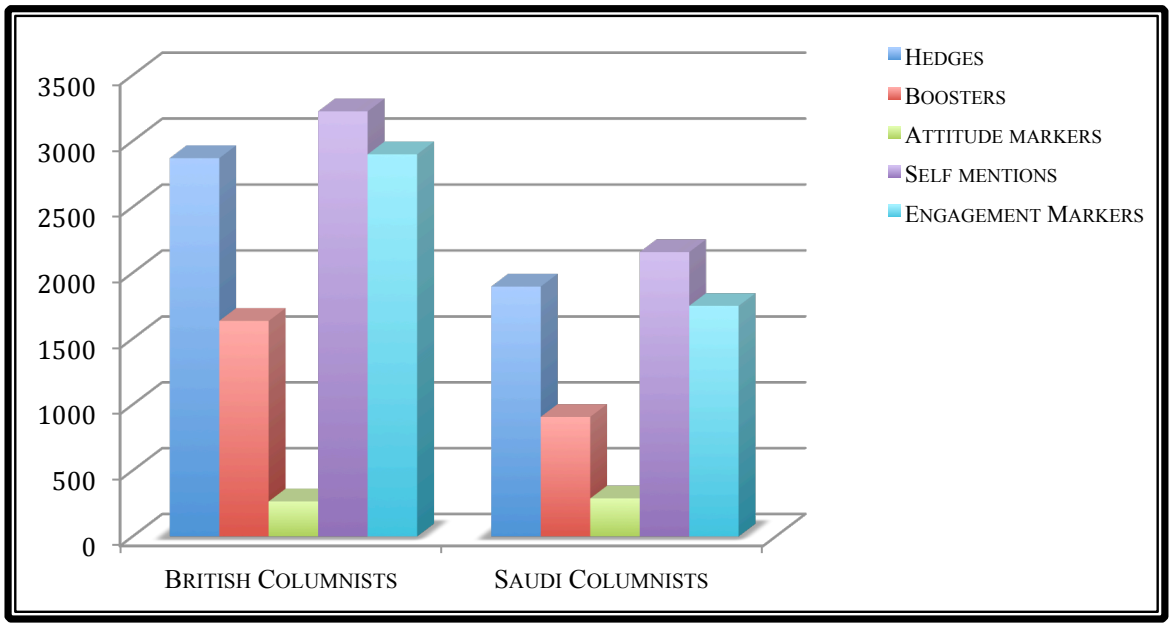


Figure 51. Distribution of Interactional Resources in British and Saudi Opinion Texts

The findings revealed that both groups of writers showed a frequent use of interactional resources in their opinion texts as shown in Fig. (52) and (53). The findings also showed

that the most frequent sub-category of interactional metadiscourse in the whole corpus is *self-mentions,* followed by *engagement markers* and *hedges*, with *boosters* occupying the third place, and finally *attitude markers* standing at the end of the list.

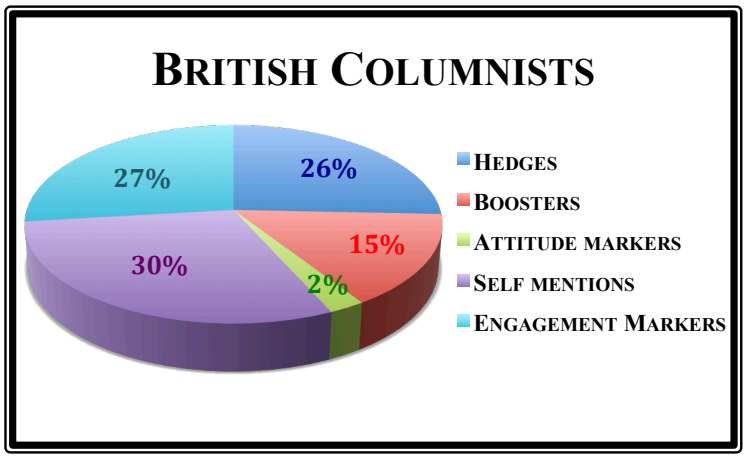


Figure 52. Percentage of Interactional Resources in British Corpus

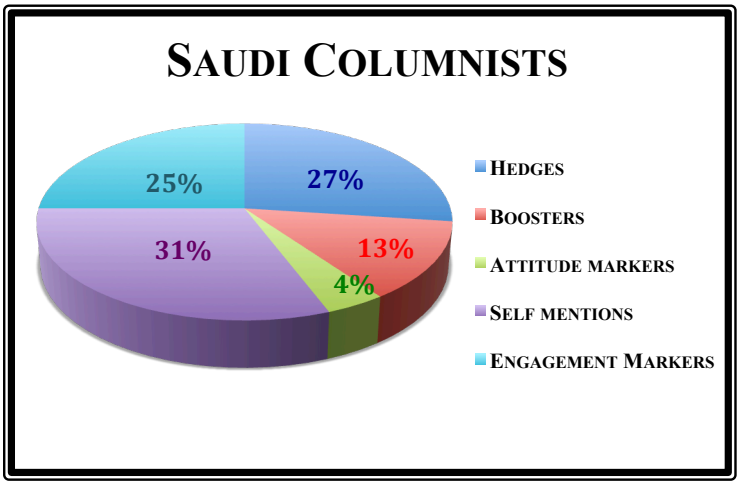


Figure 53. Percentage of Interactional Resources in Saudi Corpus

Chi-Square test was also run to find out if there is any significant difference between British and Saudi writers in terms of using interactional resources. Statistical results revealed that the significance level is ($X^2 = 62.085 < 9.49$), as shown in Table (77), and this indicated that the differences between opinion writers in the use of interactional resources of metadiscourse in opinion texts are statistically significant.

Table 77. ***Results of Chi-test of British and Saudi Columnists' Use of Interactional Resources***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	4	62.085	1.057	$X^2 < 9.49$
N of Valid Cases	**17891**			

Level of Significance = 9.49

The following sections present a detailed look into the sub-categories of interactional resources and how they are distributed in the columns of British and Saudi writers.

A. Hedges

Hedges are linguistic devices that indicate the writer's decision to recognize alternative voices and viewpoints and so withhold complete commitment to a proposition (Bhatia *et al*., 2012). According to Hyland (2005a), "hedges emphasize the subjectivity of a position by allowing information to be presented as an opinion rather than a fact and therefore open that position to negotiation" (p.52). Both British and Saudi writers made considerable use of *hedges* in their texts. These devices were widely employed by writers in the corpus, with **2870** hedges (18 *per 1000 words*) found in the British corpus and **1896** tokens (15 *per 1000 words*) in the Saudi corpus. Hedges were more frequent in the British articles than those in the Saudi ones. The most frequently used hedges were *about, could, would,* and *should*. They were used 461, 210, 370, 206 times respectively in the British corpus, and 252, 135, 227, 274 times in the Saudi corpus. After applying the Chi-Square test at α=0.05 with a degree of freedom of 1 (DF=1), results showed that the difference between writers in the use of hedges is considered to be not quite statistically significant as displayed in Table (78).

Table 78. ***Results of Chi-test of British and Saudi Columnists' Use of Hedges***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	1	3.33	0.06	**$X^2 > 3.84$**
N of Valid Cases	**4766**			

B. Boosters

Boosters are linguistic devices that allow writers to close down alternatives and express certainty in what they say (Bhatia *et al*., 2012). According to Hyland (2005a), the use of boosters strengthens an argument by emphasizing the mutual experiences needed to draw the same conclusions as the writer. The use of boosters tended to be less common than hedges in the writings of both groups of writers, as shown in Fig. (54). The analysis showed that the British writers used significantly more boosters (**1635** tokens, 10 *per 1000 words*) than did the Saudi writers (**907** tokens, 7 *per 1000 words*). The boosters most used by British writers were the verbs '*know* and *think', and* the adverbs '*always* and *never'*. They were used **194**, **147**, **118**, **150** times respectively. The verb '*know'* was also the most frequently used booster in the Saudi corpus as it was used **112** times.

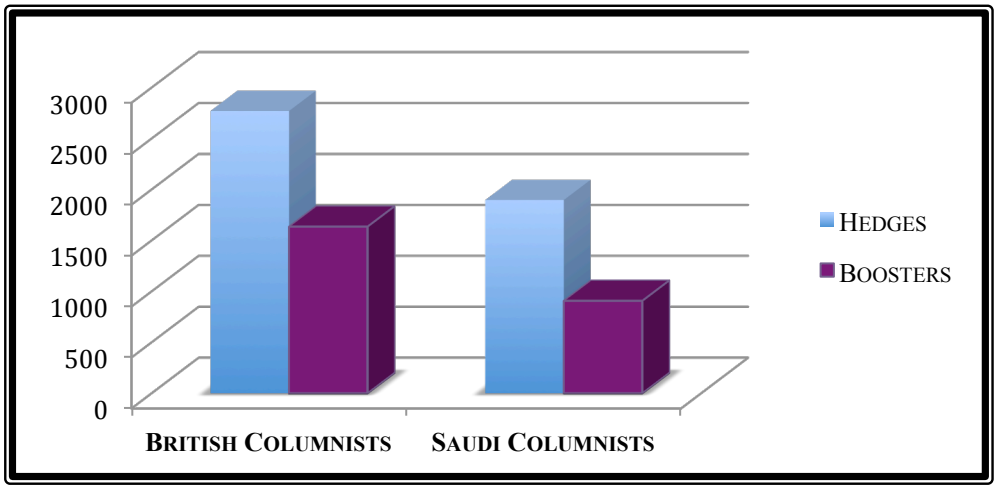


Figure 54. Distribution of Hedges and Boosters in British and Saudi Opinion Texts

The Chi-Square test was again used to determine the significance of the difference among the frequency of use of boosters in both corpora. Chi-Square test equals (X^2 = 14.180), with 1 degree of freedom (DF=1), and shows that the difference is considered to be highly statistically significant, as shown in Table (79). Statistical findings confirmed that the difference between British and Saudi columnists regarding the use of boosters is significant.

Table 79. ***Results of Chi-test of British and Saudi Columnists' Use of Boosters***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	1	14.180	0.0002	**X^2 < 3.84**
N of Valid Cases	2542			

Level of Significance = 3.84

C. Attitude markers

Attitude markers indicate the writer's affective attitude to propositions, conveying surprise, agreement, importance, frustration and so on (Hyland, 2012). Regarding the use of attitude markers, the analysis reveled that the frequency of attitude markers is especially low in both corpora: the British and the Saudi. However, the two groups of writers used a similar total of attitude markers: British writers (265 tokens, 1 *per 1000 words*) and the Saudi writers (288 tokens, 2 *per 1000 words*). The word '*important*' is found to be the most frequent attitude marker in both corpora and it was used more often in the Saudi corpus. Despite the fact that the difference between the two groups in the normalized totals is small, statistical results showed that this difference is statistically significant, Table (80). Chi-Square equals (37.679) with 1 degree of freedom (DF=1), P value is less than 0.0001. This difference is considered to be highly statistically significant.

Table 80. ***Results of Chi-test of British and Saudi Columnists' Use of Attitude Markers***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	1	37.679	0.0001	**X^2 < 3.84**
N of Valid Cases	**553**			

Level of Significance = 3.84

D. Self -mentions

The quantitative analysis showed that self-mentions were by far the most frequent interactional metadiscourse markers in the corpus, with **3225** occurrences in the British articles (20 *per 1000 words*), and **2157** occurrences (18 *per 1000 words*) in the Saudi corpus. Both sets of writers have self-mentions as the greatest number of interactional metadiscourse. Self-mentions were detonated by the use of the first person pronouns *'I'* and '*We'* and the possessive adjectives '*My*' and '*Our*'. Findings of the Chi-Square test, shown in Table (81), revealed that the test value is (X^2 =1.266 > 3.84), and this means that the difference between both groups of writers in using self-mentions in opinion texts is not considered statistically significant.

Table 81. ***Results of Chi-test of British and Saudi Columnists' Use of Self–mentions***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	1	1.266	0.2605	**X^2 > 3.84**
N of Valid Cases	5382			

E. Engagement markers

Engagement markers are devices that attract the attention of the reader directly by addressing them. These devices include forms of using readers as discourse participants through the use of pronouns *you, your*, and *we*. Engagement markers may also consist of interjected phrases such as *you know*, or *by the way*. The quantitative analysis of the

corpus revealed that there are **2899** tokens of engagement markers in the British corpus, and **1749** tokens in the Saudi corpus. Engagement markers were used more frequently by the British writers in their opinion texts (18 *instances per 1000 words*), than Saudi writers who used (14 *instances per 1000 words)*. Statistical results confirmed that the difference between British and Saudi writers in their use of engagement markers is statistically significant as shown in Table (82):

Table 82. ***Results of Chi-test of British and Saudi Columnists' Use of Engagement Markers***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	1	5.628	0.0177	**$X^2 < 3.84$**
N of Valid Cases	4648			

Level of Significance = 3.84

In sum, it is evident that both groups of writers made use of both interactive and interactional metadiscourse in their opinion columns. At a general level, a close similarity has been found in the normalized totals of metadiscourse between the two corpora. However, statistical findings confirmed that the difference between British and Saudi writers in the use of metadiscourse resources in opinion texts was statistically significant, with British writers showing a high frequency of use of metadiscourse resources. This significant difference was also found between the two groups in the use of subcategories of metadiscourse such as in the use of *transition markers, frame markers, code glosses, boosters, attitude markers,* and *engagement markers.* British writers used a higher frequency of *engagement markers, frame markers,* and *boosters* than Saudi writers. In contrast, Saudi writers used a higher frequency of *transition markers*, *attitude markers,* and *code glosses.*

The previous sections have presented a detailed description of the results of the comparative analysis of metadiscourse in the corpus. The following sections will present the results of the comparative analysis between British and Saudi writers regarding text layout, headlines structure, writing style, topic selection, use of linguistic and rhetorical devices.

7.2. Layout of British and Saudi Opinion Columns

Columns refer to a series of articles by the same person appearing on a regular basis in a newspaper and giving the person's personal opinion on different issues (Shams, 2013). They are the narrow vertical sections in newspapers that often appear in the opinion pages or sometimes in separate columns section. Layout refers to the spatial arrangement of texts, pictures, and other graphic elements and it is a critical component in the publication process and of the transmission of messages to an audience (Sterling, 2009). The layout of columns is visually less imposing and more text-heavy than the remainder of the newspaper, with small headlines and few photographs. Typically, the only photographs in the opinion pages are black-and-white thumbnail images of columnists (Franklin, 2008, p. 69). The analysis revealed that British and Saudi columnists have used a variety of layouts. Some have used illustrative images and subheadings. Others are confined to the typical format of the traditional column. Table (83), illustrates some differences in the layout of columns in British and Saudi corpus:

Table 83. *Layout of British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

Layout	***British Columnists***	***Saudi Columnists***
Photographs	**75** (46%)	**0**
Headlines	**160** (100%)	**160** (100%)
Sub-Headings	**160** (100%)	**0**
Paragraph-headings	**12** (7%)	**0**

As can be seen from the above table, layouts of columns in British and Saudi corpus were different. On one hand, all the British opinion columns have headlines and subheadings. The font of the headlines was always bold and black. Subheadings were regular font and they appear in black or grey. Subheadings come under the headlines and they are essentially expanding the idea of the headlines and offering the reader more detail about the content of the column. British opinion columns are also accompanied by colourful images. These images appeared in 75 (46%) columns. The images can be photos, cartoons, or drawings often presented with a small text. In addition to these images, the photograph of the columnists was always there on the left side of the column with their names in bold red font. The following images from the British corpus display these visual features:

theguardian

Our high streets are under attack. We need to fight back

John Harris

The Guardian, Sunday 14 October 2012 19.30 BST

It suits big business for people to believe our town centres are dying. But local campaign groups are uniting to defend them

Four years or so it was: from the aftermath of the crash to the arrival of the double-dip recession. Circa 2008-9, there was a mass pang of worry about increasing numbers of empty shops, and the prospect of the UK following the trajectory of middle America – that of becoming a mess of dusty old urban centres and giant out-of-town malls. Now, we seem close to accepting all this as a matter of inevitability – even a sign of progress.

Between January and June this year, the proportion of British shops lying empty increased again, to an average of nearly 15%; the centre of Nottingham topped the rankings with 31% of shops unoccupied, up from 23%. But for those big corporate interests who have staked their money on retail parks, the news was rather different: in those places, the average vacancy figure is a lowly 9%.

'The dominance of the supermarkets is explained away with reference to convenience and customer service.' Illustration: Andrzej Krauze

From there, it is only a short hop to one of the most alarming beliefs of our time – that the high street has had it, and only charity shops, bookies and coffee outlets can even do business there, along with the supermarkets' ubiquitous convenience stores. The latter are now spreading at speed into disused pubs, which represents a poetic development indeed: one-time centres of socialising now echoing only to the grim bleeps of self- service checkouts, as Jacob's Creek, cigarettes and ready meals are ferried home to be consumed in private.

Not surprisingly, the standard explanation for all this takes its cue from the credo of the free market. Britain, it's said, is so overjoyed with internet consumerism that the old- fashioned shop seems drab – but no one mentions the fact that Amazon

Figure 55. A British Opinion Column

THE TIMES

Our plastic bag addiction is choking the planet

Hugo Rifkind

Published at 12:01AM, December 17 2013

It's obvious we use too many of them. So why does it take a government levy to make us cut back?

Just over a decade ago, for a year, I lived in South Africa. No, alas, this isn't a column about Nelson Mandela, which I'm sure will be a disappointment, because there haven't really been enough of those, have there? No, it's about plastic bags. Because South African supermarkets, you see, were utterly mad for them. Bags inside bags inside bags. Meat in one sort of little bag, dairy in another, vegetables in a third, miscellaneous frozen goods in a fourth. More than once, I kid you not, I bought binbags, which were put in a small bag, which was then, like everything else, put into a bigger bag.

If you put up a fight, they really didn't like it. In that characteristic, slightly prissy South African fashion, they took offence. "I just thenk it's gross," one of my housemates would occasionally say, when I'd unilaterally lump everything altogether. "Doesn't eet bother yoh heving your bacon touching yoh fruit?"

I suppose, if you wanted, you could extrapolate an apartheid vibe from South African grocery habits, but I'm not going to because, as I said, this isn't to be a column about Nelson Mandela. Sorry.

The point is that South Africa had a plastic bag problem. They knew it too. Sometimes they'd refer to them as their national flower, in tribute to the way you'd see them on the verges, stuck to trees, wrapped around bushes and generally everywhere else. By some accounts, the country was using more than eight billion a year, pretty good going for a country of about 40 million people, half of whom were too poor to do much shopping. So, about a year after I left, they finally took the problem in hand. The thinnest plastic bags were outlawed on pain of a (no, really) ten-year jail sentence. Thicker ones were still permitted, but had to be sold.

Obviously it worked and the country was transformed. The thing is that it didn't work for very long. According to the terribly exciting *Analysis of the Plastic-Bag Levy in South Africa* (film rights, I believe, still up for grabs), by three academics at the University of Cape Town, new bag supply dipped sharply, then started climbing again towards previous heights, as customers simply factored in the (very low) cost. Or, to put it another way, the demand for plastic just ain't elastic.

As you'll have read on our front page yesterday, our Government is keen to bring in a levy to curb our own plastic bag use. Amid debate about precisely what sort of businesses it should apply to, the South African experience ought to give us a moment's pause. Some other plastic bag taxes, it is true, have

Figure 56. A British Opinion Column

A number of British columns included a series of photographs, which are of a direct relation with the topic of the column. The following is an opinion piece about *family holidays* by *Suzanne Moore* shows this feature:

theguardian

Family holidays: why Venice is great for kids

Venice isn't only about romantic breaks. The city's dream-like beauty, drama and quirks will also captivate your children

Suzanne Moore
The Guardian, Friday 29 March 2013 21.00 GMT

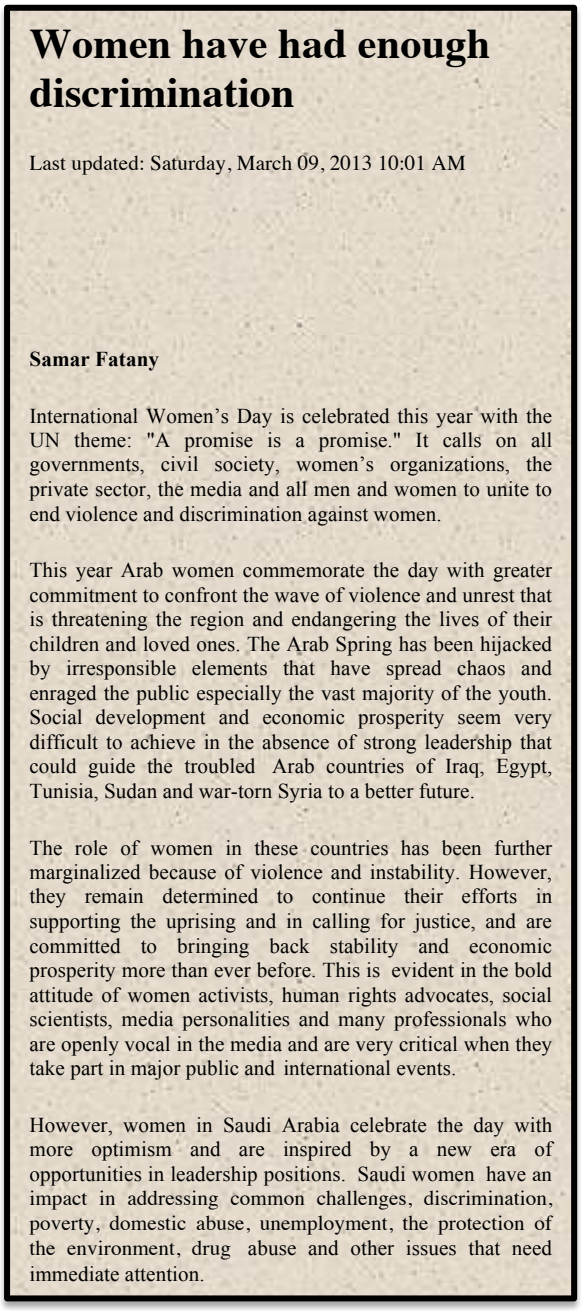
Suzanne Moore and her daughter, Angel, masked on the streets of Venice

There is nothing worse than going to places that are meant to be romantic with a partner. It ends not in tears but in 48-hour sulking. Venice is full of miserable couples eating terrible food, bored of each other and even more bored of looking at churches. It doesn't have to be this way. I love Venice, even though I have paid my "couply" dues there. It is smelly, creepy and totally improbable. I love it in the way I love Las Vegas, which could only be made because they could pipe in water to create this fantasy in the desert. Venice is equally fantastical and theme-parky.

Spooky Venice is brilliant for kids. Photograph: Corbis

We stayed at Ca' Masena in Dorsoduro – it's beautifully equipped, with an outside patio. You are much better doing this than trying to squash yourselves into the small, ultra-expensive hotel rooms near Piazza San Marco. You can relax, make your breakfast in the morning, and then you can walk everywhere, or get *vaporettos* (waterbuses, also not cheap). You may eat some of the worst meals of your life in Venice, unless you are a local or book months ahead. Thank God for prosecco is all I say. And stick to the snack bars and fabulous ice-cream joints. Do, though, fly to Marco Polo airport rather than taking a budget flight to Treviso.

On the other hand, the analysis showed that the layout of Saudi columns was very typical consisting of the headline and the text with only the photographs of the columnists appearing on the left side of the column. The following figures from the Saudi corpus display the typical layout of Saudi columns:



Women have had enough discrimination

Last updated: Saturday, March 09, 2013 10:01 AM

Samar Fatany

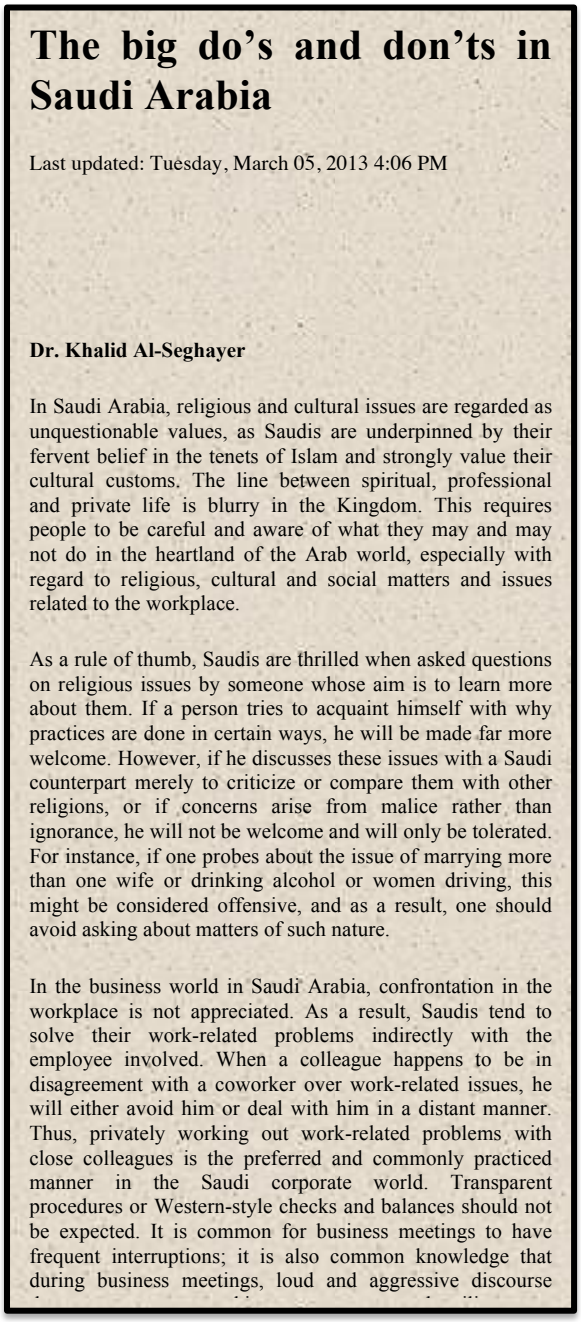
International Women's Day is celebrated this year with the UN theme: "A promise is a promise." It calls on all governments, civil society, women's organizations, the private sector, the media and all men and women to unite to end violence and discrimination against women.

This year Arab women commemorate the day with greater commitment to confront the wave of violence and unrest that is threatening the region and endangering the lives of their children and loved ones. The Arab Spring has been hijacked by irresponsible elements that have spread chaos and enraged the public especially the vast majority of the youth. Social development and economic prosperity seem very difficult to achieve in the absence of strong leadership that could guide the troubled Arab countries of Iraq, Egypt, Tunisia, Sudan and war-torn Syria to a better future.

The role of women in these countries has been further marginalized because of violence and instability. However, they remain determined to continue their efforts in supporting the uprising and in calling for justice, and are committed to bringing back stability and economic prosperity more than ever before. This is evident in the bold attitude of women activists, human rights advocates, social scientists, media personalities and many professionals who are openly vocal in the media and are very critical when they take part in major public and international events.

However, women in Saudi Arabia celebrate the day with more optimism and are inspired by a new era of opportunities in leadership positions. Saudi women have an impact in addressing common challenges, discrimination, poverty, domestic abuse, unemployment, the protection of the environment, drug abuse and other issues that need immediate attention.

Figure 58. A Saudi Opinion Column



The big do's and don'ts in Saudi Arabia

Last updated: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 4:06 PM

Dr. Khalid Al-Seghayer

In Saudi Arabia, religious and cultural issues are regarded as unquestionable values, as Saudis are underpinned by their fervent belief in the tenets of Islam and strongly value their cultural customs. The line between spiritual, professional and private life is blurry in the Kingdom. This requires people to be careful and aware of what they may and may not do in the heartland of the Arab world, especially with regard to religious, cultural and social matters and issues related to the workplace.

As a rule of thumb, Saudis are thrilled when asked questions on religious issues by someone whose aim is to learn more about them. If a person tries to acquaint himself with why practices are done in certain ways, he will be made far more welcome. However, if he discusses these issues with a Saudi counterpart merely to criticize or compare them with other religions, or if concerns arise from malice rather than ignorance, he will not be welcome and will only be tolerated. For instance, if one probes about the issue of marrying more than one wife or drinking alcohol or women driving, this might be considered offensive, and as a result, one should avoid asking about matters of such nature.

In the business world in Saudi Arabia, confrontation in the workplace is not appreciated. As a result, Saudis tend to solve their work-related problems indirectly with the employee involved. When a colleague happens to be in disagreement with a coworker over work-related issues, he will either avoid him or deal with him in a distant manner. Thus, privately working out work-related problems with close colleagues is the preferred and commonly practiced manner in the Saudi corporate world. Transparent procedures or Western-style checks and balances should not be expected. It is common for business meetings to have frequent interruptions; it is also common knowledge that during business meetings, loud and aggressive discourse

Figure 59. A Saudi Opinion Column

7.3. Headlines of Opinion Columns

A headline refers to the title or the main heading of an opinion column in a newspaper, which often appears on separate lines above the column, and is printed in bold font. The headline plays a crucial role in drawing the reader's attention as he/she scans the newspaper. It is the major factor for the reader in deciding whether or not to read the column. According to Van Dijk (1991), headlines in the press have important cognitive function. Headlines are usually read first and the information expressed in them is strategically used by the reader during the process of understanding in order to construct the overall meaning of the text before the text itself is even read.

The analysis examined 320 headlines in British and Saudi corpora. Results revealed that all the opinion columns have headlines and these headlines fall into three classifications:

1. *Direct Headlines*: are straightforward and informative. It tells the reader directly about the topic of the column.
2. *Question Headlines*: When a writer frames a headline like a question, he expects his readers seek the answer in the text (Aggarwal & Gupta, 2001).
3. *Command Headlines:* A command headline politely orders the reader to do something (Aggarwal & Gupta, 2001).

In addition, sometimes columnists used proverbs or proverbial phrases as headlines. The following table and chart display types of headlines in both corpora:

Table 84. *Types of Headlines in British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

Headlines	*British Columnists*	*Saudi Columnists*
Direct Headlines	119 (75%)	130 (82%)
Question Headlines	26 (16%)	16 (10%)
Command Headlines	14 (9%)	10 (6%)
Proverbs	1 (0%)	4 (2%)

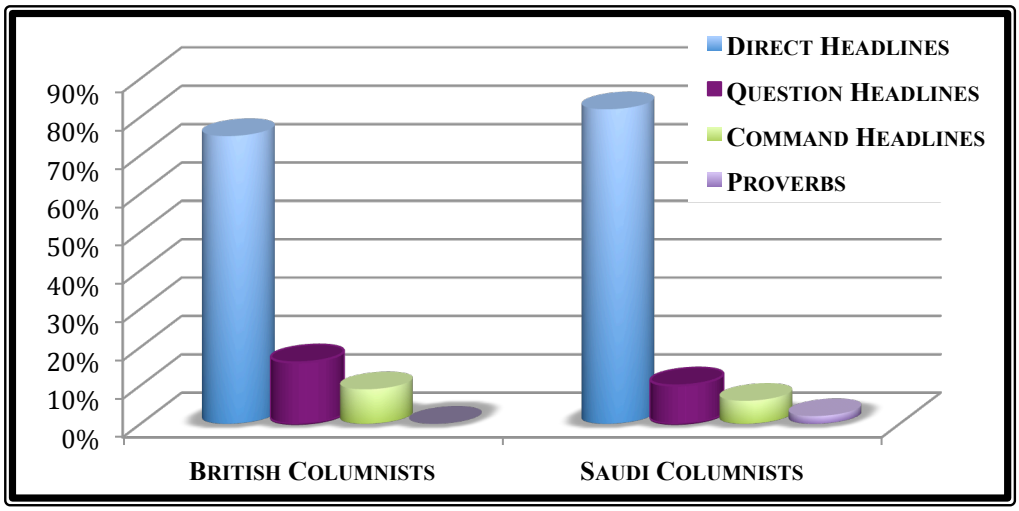


Figure 60. Distribution of Headline Types in British and Saudi Opinion

As shown in the above figures, the analysis confirmed similarities in headlines type between British and Saudi columns. Most of the headlines in both corpora are direct verbal messages informing the reader about the various topics of the columns as the following examples show:

- *Writers Can No Longer Hide Behind a Pen Name*
- *The Human Touch Beats The Click of a Mouse*
- *Making Travel 'Safer' is a Dangerous Game*

→ **British Columns**

- *Judging The Pros and Cons of Social Media*
- *Books Are Still My Best Friend in The Digital Age*
- *Domestic Violence is More Than Just a Black Eye*

→ **Saudi Columns**

Both columnists also used question headlines in some columns. Question headlines are highly effective in capturing the reader's attention and at the same time they evoke curiosity as the following examples illustrate:

- *What Exactly Can Private Schools Teach the State Sector?*
- *Why Britain Still Wants to Fight Europe on the Beaches?*
- *Why is Abortion Under Threat?*

→ **British Columns**

- *How Should We Treat Our Housemaids?*
- *What Can We Learn from Finland?*
- *Can Saudi Women Writers Influence Change?*

→ **Saudi Columns**

Command headlines were also used with a low frequency in both corpora. Command headlines often contain an imperative verb that engages the reader and makes him/her wants to act. Here are some examples from the corpus:

- *Ban All the Pubs, Now. This is 2013, Not 1320*
- *Leave the Age of Consent Alone*
- *Ban Smoking in Cars*

→ **British Columns**

- *Bring Back My Sidewalk*
- *Try to Look at The Big Picture*
- *Let Woman decide How to Deal With Her Health*

→ **Saudi Columns**

At a grammatical level, opinion column headlines are often complete sentences or short phrases. Opinion column headlines, in both corpora, have the typical syntactic features of headlines such as: omission of verbs and auxiliaries, nominalizations, and the use of

present simple tense. According to McArthur (1998), the syntax of headlines is epigrammatic and elliptical with the possible omission of certain closed class words and the verb *be*, a simplified tense system, heavy premodification, a special use of punctuation, reliance on abbreviations. The analysis of the corpus also compared the syntax of column headlines. Headlines were classified into three categories: complete sentences, elliptical sentences with the omission of certain words, and noun phrases or nominal groups. Results of the syntax of column headlines are presented in Table (85):

Table 85. *Structures of Headlines in British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

Structure of Headlines	*British Columnists*	*Examples*	*Saudi Columnists*	*Examples*
Complete Sentences	142 (89%)	*- Our Plastic Bag Addiction is Chocking the Planet* *- False Feminists Want to Make Abortion Harder* *- It's Rude to Say Modern People are Ill-mannered*	90 (56%)	*- Gender Equality Must Become a Lived Reality* *- Nursing is More Than an Honorable Profession* *- Please Give Us Holidays that are Value for Money*
Elliptical Sentences	12 (8%)	*- Why destroy sea Creatures, not Protect Them?* *- An Inverted World Where A Woman Kills Men* *- Half A Million Britons Using Food Banks.*	10 (6%)	*- Enough Studies, We Need Solutions* *- Public Vs. Private Schools Why the Difference?* *- Child Protection A Must*
Nominal Groups	6 (3%)	*- Food, Glorious Food* *- High Heels and Helmets* *- Family Holidays*	60 (38%)	*- Arab Spring Death to Humanity* *- Freedom of Expression* *- The Beauty of Sleep*

As the table above shows, complete sentences represent the most frequently used type of headlines. Complete sentences are quite common in both corpora and they are obviously prevalent in the British corpus, as they constitute 89%. Both groups of

columnists show a similarity of use regarding elliptical headlines. Also, Saudi columnists used more nominal groups in their opinion columns than British columnists. The analysis revealed that nominal headlines were considerably higher in Saudi opinion columns (38%) more than in British columns (3%). The analysis of headlines also examined the use of rhetorical devices such as *parallelism, antithesis, alliteration,* and *pun*. Results revealed that the frequency of use of these devices is relatively low in both corpora as the following table display:

Table 86. *Rhetorical Devices in British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

Rhetorical Devices	*British Columnists*	*Examples*	*Saudi Columnists*	*Examples*
Parallelism	9	*- If Buying Home is Bad, Renting is Even Worse* *- We Need More Homes, Not Easier Mortgages*	7	*- Skyrocketing Rents, Sinking Morale* *- Red lines and Red Lipstick*
Alliteration	10	*- **H**igh **H**eels and **H**elmets* *- They've Declared a **W**orld **W**ar Against **W**omen*	13	*- The **P**roblems of **P**unctuality and **P**roductivity in Saudi Arabia* *- **W**hen **W**omen Can **W**atch*
Antithesis	7	*- Why Destroy Sea Creatures, not Protect Them?* *- The Human Touch Beats The Click of A Mouse*	6	*- Saudi Arabia and its People are Reactive Not Proactive* *- Public Vs. Private Schools: Why the Difference?*
Repetition	5	*- Food, Glorious Food* *- Sunny! Sunny! Sunny! Out! Out! Out!*	6	*- Great Team with a Great Motto* *- Smoking without Smoking*

7.4. British and Saudi Topic Choice

Opinion columns cover a range of topics: political and business commentaries, lifestyle, entertainment, travel, sports and leisure, science and technology (Friginal & Hardy, 2014). The analysis of this study also took into consideration the topic choice of opinion columns.

Results showed that columnists of both groups engaged in a diverse array of topics from international affairs to modern technology. Table (87), displays the distribution of the various topics by British and Saudi columnists in the corpus:

Table 87. *Topic Choice in British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

Topics	**Examples**	***British Columnists***	***Saudi Columnists***
Political Issues	Arab Spring- Syria's War- Thatcherism – British Justice	24 (15%)	12 (7.5%)
Social Issues	Marriage- Smoking- Housing Abortion-Recycling- Family-working Children- Old Age-Crimes- Rape- Childcare – Obesity – old mothers – Racism- Corruption – Domestic Violence – Retirement – Drugs	77 (48%)	97 (60%)
Financial Issues	Budget- Taxes- Mortgages	5 (5%)	5 (5%)
Education	Schools-Academic Research-Books- Scholarship- Private Education- Curriculums	10 (6.25%)	19 (11.87%)
Entertainment	Travel- Holidays- Movies – Cinemas- Video Games	5 (3%)	3 (1.87%)
Modern Technology	Internet- Robots- Apple – Google- Smart Phones – Social Media	9 (5.62%)	13 (8.125%)
Environment	Climate Change- Sea Creatures -	3 (1.87%)	1 (0.62%)
Personal Experience	Joining the gym- Family Holiday- Personal Habits	15 (9.37%)	4 (2.5%)
Sport	Football- World's Cup	2 (1.25%)	2 (1.25%)
Fashion	High heels- Lipsticks-Models- Cosmetics – Hair Style	4 (2.5%)	2 (1.25%)
History	British Wars- Nazi Horrors-Czech Story	6 (4%)	2 (1.25%)

As can be seen from the above table, the analysis revealed that both groups of columnists covered a wide array of topics. Both groups of columnists covered a similar

number of topics related to entertainment, environment, sport, fashion, and history. Results also showed that British columnists in their columns are covering more political topics and sharing more personal experience with their readers than Saudi columnists. In contrast, Saudi columns covered more social issues (60%); and more topics related to education (11.87%) and modern technology (8.125%). In spite of this, British and Saudi writers do share some topics such as *Syria war; world cup; room service; coffee; smoking; Britain Royal family; private schools; housing and rents;* and *family holidays*. The following two extracts from two columns from the two different corpus show that both columnists are talking about the same topic but each is writing from his/her own perspective and cultural background:

- In fact, a while ago I did some research about coffee, and how it went on to become the foremost beverage of choice for many cultures around the world. Although we Arabs have come up with the name for coffee, many other cultures participated in giving it the distinctive status it has now. The Ottoman Turks for instance were responsible for introducing it to the Europeans, who in turn transferred it to the Americas and the rest of the world. I also enjoyed discovering some social characteristics of coffee in Saudi Arabia, such as the fact that serving your guests Arabic coffee is an absolute must, and the guest being able to recognize the origins of their host by tasting the added spices he uses with his coffee.

(Wake up and smell the Arabic coffee by **Mohammed AlSaif**, A Saudi Male columnist)

- Sipping his cappuccino, staring out at the cold, hard, oily Thames, he had an onrush of caffeine, and future-vision. "I'm going to go to Cambridge University," he said. "Then I'm going to move down to London and live opposite this Starbucks." Reader: he did. In 2001, Starbucks was inspiring. You wanted one in your town. You yearned to see its logo on the motorway. Its thick white cup in your hand felt comforting. It made you feel carefree and clever. No one was going to go to a tiny, net-curtained café and buy a50p cup of tea off a nan ever, ever again. Starbucks' roiling green mermaid was our sexy hero muse. She was going to take us into the future.

(Wake up and smell the coffee by **Caitlin Moran**, A British Female columnist)

The following two extracts from the two different corpora also show that both columnists are talking about the same topic but each is writing about her own personal experience:

- I've got insomnia. But at least it's given me time to think. And to face a few home truths. I am, for the first time in a life hitherto customarily spent wrapped securely in the benign arms of Morpheus for at least eight hours in every 24, suffering from insomnia. I don't know why. I presume that, having seen how much fun my body has been having for the past 20 years, finding new and interesting ways to betray me since the first flush of youth fled, my brain has decided to get in on the act. Nice. I generally give up at around 3am, get up and go and sit by the bedroom window to watch the foxes: scraggy, urban things, depressed and discontented, spirits eroded by the nagging feeling that life was never meant to be so hard, grey, mean and tough on the footpads, and that even a constant supply of KFC and curry chips spilling forth on every corner will not be enough to fill the fathomless void within.

(There aren't many plus sides to insomnia by **Lucy Mangan,** a British Female Columnist)

- I was once a champion sleeper. I could sleep on planes in economy, I could sleep on couches, on beds hard as nails or on beds as soft as candy-floss. I could sleep after drinking half-a-dozen cappuccinos or sipping a strong after-dinner espresso. I could doze off at 10 p.m. just as easily as 3 a.m., my bed-time was entirely opportunistic, I went to sleep when my day ended, I just lay my head on a pillow and bam, gone for eight hours. It was fabulous. But no more. In recent weeks I have discovered insomnia, and now that I have experienced going through my days in a zombie-like state, never feeling fully awake nor fully rested, waking up in the morning even more exhausted than when I went to sleep, I feel enormous sympathy for those who suffer from insomnia on a regular basis.

(*The Beauty of Sleep* by **Imane Kurdi**, a Saudi Female Columnist)

Results showed that British and Saudi columnists write about current events (*the Arab spring; world cup; digital revolution*); local affairs (*budget, education, schools, healthcare, housing and renting)*; social issues (*crimes, childcare, marriage, smoking, drugs, domestic violence*); and specific topics (*food, sleep, fashion, travel*). Columnists write about these topics from their perspective and backgrounds. Columnists also share their opinion with the reader, offering suggestions and solutions for a certain subject. Whether presenting information and facts or sharing personal experiences, columnists

always succeeded in providing writings that hold readers' attention and help them in finding insights and answers about the world around them.

7.5. British and Saudi Style of Writing

The corpus of this study is composed of 320 opinion columns published in English written by native and non-native speakers of English. Despite the fact that these columns underwent a reviewing and editing process to ensure that they conformed to the standards and the style of a journalistic genre, there are some differences in the style between the two groups of columnists which confirmed that columnists are coming from different language backgrounds. To draw a comparative comparison of the writing style between British and Saudi columnists, the analysis examined a set of features including: *average word length, average sentence length, use of punctuation marks, short forms, use of proverbs*, and *type of style*. The analysis was carried out manually and with the help of the software LIWC. Some differences of style are summarized in the following:

I- Text Length, Sentence Length, and *Punctuation Marks*

The analysis revealed that British writers have written longer texts than Saudi writers. The total length of British texts is 154773 words, whereas the total length of Saudi texts is 119000 words. The average of a British column is 967 words, whereas the average of the Saudi column is 743 words. Both columnists have written within the average of writing opinion columns, as a typical column can range from 250 words to 1000 words (Standring, 2008). In spite of this result, it was surprising that the sentences of Saudi texts have more words than British sentences. The analysis showed that the average number of words per sentence in Saudi texts is 23 words, whereas the average sentence length in British texts is

13 words. British columnists write longer texts but shorter sentences than Saudi columnists. The following table displays some examples from the corpus, which show the difference between British and Saudi writers in sentence length:

Table 88. *Sentence length in British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

British Columnists	***No of Words in a Sentence***	***Saudi Columnists***	***No of Words in a Sentence***
- By virtue of renting, moreover, there's every chance your bank balance isn't a dream to start with. **(***If buying a home is bad, renting is far worse* by **Hugo Rifkind)**	**17**	- In a world where people increasingly feel the need to record their every moment in photographs and posts online, these life stories give us anchors, they remind us of where we have come from, and they trace the course of history in the most intimate and poignant manner possible. *(The Story of Our lives* by **Imane Kurdi***)*	**49**
- Too much political energy is spent discussing the level of spending or immigration. (*Can the rest of Britain compete with London?* by **Tim Montgomerie**)	**13**	- In the anonymous world of social media where everybody has an opinion, but doesn't want to take responsibility for those opinions there is a bit of a dust-up over an American woman who made it to the finals in "Arabs Got Talent." *(Influence of Arab culture in the West* by **Sabria Jawhar***)*	**42**
-Passive tolerance is probably not a concept many people have yet heard of. (*If you don't think multiculturalism is working, look at your street corner* by **Madeleine Bunting)**	**13**	- Being engaged by people's stories and plights through online sources promotes a sense of kinship with others across wide territories and it is extraordinary and inspiring to see to what extent people are willing to respond materially. *(Judging the pros and cons of social media* by ***Alaa Alghamdi)***	**37**

Regarding the use of punctuation marks, the analysis revealed that both groups of writers used a high number of punctuation marks in their opinion columns. There were 19928

punctuation marks in British texts (*128 per 1000 words*); and 11966 punctuation marks in Saudi texts (*100 per 1000 words*). Within punctuation marks, *commas* and *full stops* were the most frequently used punctuation marks in both opinion texts as the Table (89), and Fig. (61) shows:

Table 89. *Punctuation Marks in British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

Punctuation Marks	***British Columnists***	***Percentage***	***Saudi Columnists***	***Percentage***
Full Stops	7143	36%	5084	42%
Commas	8534	43%	4628	38%
Colons	499	2.5%	201	1.6%
Semicolons	214	1%	110	1%
Question Marks	645	3%	840	7%
Exclamation marks	146	1%	118	1%
Dashes	632	3%	635	5.4%
Quotation Marks	577	3%	111	1%
Apostrophes	1220	6%	133	1%
Parentheses	318	1.5%	106	1%
Total of Punctuation Marks	19928		11966	
Punctuation Marks per 1000 Words	128.756		100.554	

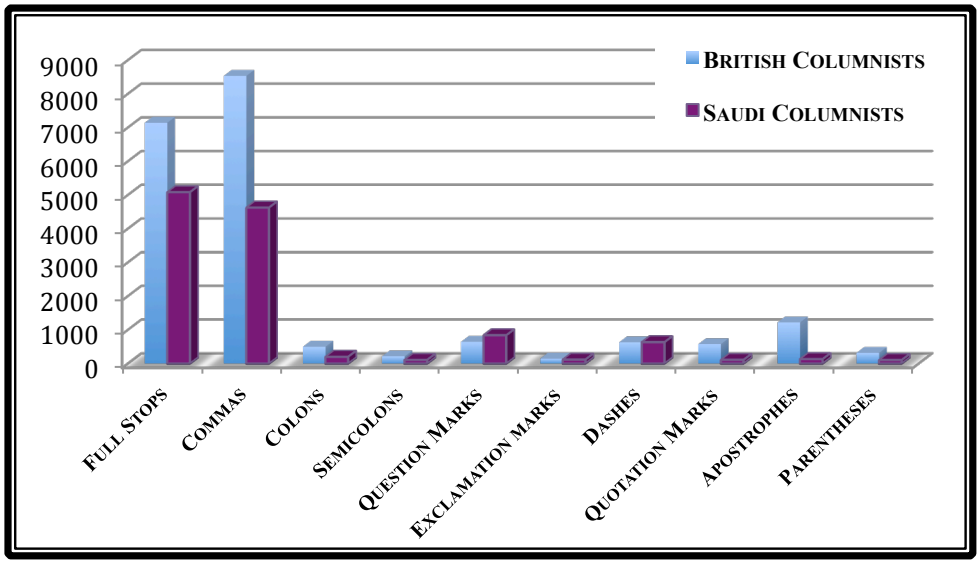


Figure 61. Distribution of Punctuation Marks in British and Saudi Opinion Texts

II- Short Forms and Colloquialisms

The analysis also revealed that British writers used more short forms of the verb *be* and *negatives* than Saudi writers. As can be seen from Table (90), British writers used 3 short forms *per 1000 words*, whereas Saudi writers used none *per 1000 words*.

Table 90. *Short forms in British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

Short Forms	***British Columnists***	***Saudi Columnists***
I'm	30	0
It's / He's /She's	163	16
They're/ We're/ You're	55	0
Don't /Doesn't /Didn't	129	37
Can't/ Couldn't /Won't/ Wouldn't	65	8
Here's/There's / That's	65	8
What's/ Where's	22	0
I'd, We'd, She/he'd, You'd / They'd	25	2
Total of Short Forms	554	71
Short Forms Per 1000 Words	3.580	0.596

In addition to the use of short forms, the analysis showed that the use of colloquialisms is evident in the British corpus. There were about **215** colloquial terms in British texts (See Appendix **F**). Some examples of these terms include: *fortnight, wanker, loo, toff, boffin, tenner, quid,* and *jolly*. No evidence of using colloquialisms was found in Saudi texts. This result confirmed that British writers tended to use a more informal style, whereas Saudi writers tended to write in a more formal style. The use of short forms and colloquialisms are two strong indicators of informal style. According to Shams (2013), the use of colloquialism is one of the hallmarks of an informal style of writing.

III- Use of Proverbs and Idiomatic Expressions

The analysis of the 320 opinion columns also included investigation into the use of fixed expressions such as *proverbs*, *sayings*, and *idioms*. The analysis showed that the use of these fixed expressions is quite uncommon in opinion columns of both groups. It revealed that the 160 opinion columns of Saudi writers contained only **25** proverbs and idiomatic expressions, whereas the 160 opinion columns of British writers have only **14** idiomatic expressions. It has also shown that proverbs very often appear in the headlines of opinion columns or at the end of the column as a concluding statement. The following headlines from the corpus display the use of proverbs:

- *Is Prevention Better than Cure?*
- *It's Better to be Safe than Sorry*
- *Are Women Their Own Worst Enemy?*
- *New or Old, Money Still Can't Buy Happiness*

It is worth mentioning that Saudi writers have used a lot of Arabic-source language words in their opinion columns that are closely related to culture. The analysis revealed that there are **390** Arabic words in the Saudi corpus such as *Wasta, Saher, Shariah*, *Salafis* and *Shoura* (See appendix **F**). These Arabic words are closely related to Saudi culture. Saudi columnists used these words of Arabic origin because of the intended readership. They use these cultural terms in order to make their columns more cohesive and accessible to the public. These terms help columnists communicate their ideas with the general public to whom these terms are widely known. In similar manner, British writers used a range of foreign words, mostly European, in their opinion texts. There were about 42 foreign words in the corpus. The following examples from the British corpus display the use of foreign words:

- I have backed myself over the years into a broadly anti-tech position on this sort of thing (mostly out of laziness and the professional need to *have* a position) and was all set to write, "Oh the humanity! Whither the open road? *Où sont les voitures d'antan?*"

- Is not great big end of world. I am terrible embarrassed, but who is care? I only Jew. Is better than dig own grave in woods, bang bang dead with *genickshusse*.

- You can relax, make your breakfast in the morning, and then you can walk everywhere, or get *vaporettos.*

IV- Type of Style

As previously mentioned in chapter six, columnists used a variety of writing styles in their opinion pieces ranging from the informative and the factual style to the more narrative and personal style. Interestingly, the analysis revealed that both groups of writers used nearly an identical number of journalistic writing styles as Table (91), and Fig. (63) display:

Table 91. *Writing Style in British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

Writing Style	***British Columnists***	***Saudi Columnists***
Inverted Pyramid (*Informational +Factual*)	103 (65%)	107 (67%)
Hourglass (*Informational + Personal*)	43 (26%)	38 (24%)
Narrative (*Personal*)	14 (9%)	15 (9%)

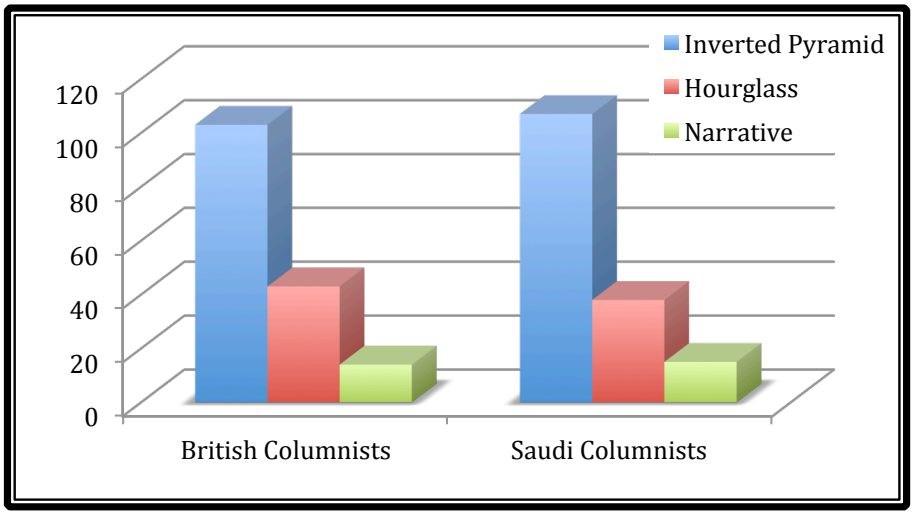


Figure 62. Distribution of Journalistic Writing Style in British and Saudi Opinion Texts

As can be seen from the previous table, findings disclose that the inverted pyramid, the informative and factual style of writing, was the most frequently used style in both sets of groups: British= 103 and Saudi=107. This style constitutes 65% and 67% in both groups of columnists and more than half of the columns have this informative style. This finding seems to confirm that columnists often depend on facts, and provide reliable information in order to get the public's trust. Columnists frequently support their opinion in their columns by offering readers recent studies, statistics, and reports about current issues. After the informative style, the hourglass style is the second most frequent style in both corpora with columnists showing a similar number of uses. Both British and Saudi columnists combine facts with their personal experience in one quarter of the columns. The narrative style is the least frequently used style in the corpus with both groups showing an identical number of uses. It is worth mentioning that the narrative style was mainly used by female columnists as was illustrated in the previous chapter. The following tables illustrate examples of the writing style of both columnists:

Table 92. *Writing Style in British Opinion Columns*

Writing Style	***British Columnists***
Inverted Pyramid (*Informational +Factual*)	The basic physics may be unanswerable, 97% of climate scientists agree that carbon emissions are dangerously heating up the planet, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warn it's 95% likely that most of the temperature rise since 1950 is due to greenhouse gases and deforestation, the risk of a global temperature rise tipping above 1.5–2C be catastrophic for humanity. The impact of this phoney controversy during an economic crisis has been dramatic: in the US, the proportion of the population accepting burning fossil fuels drives climate change dropped from 71% to 44% between 2007 and 2011. In Britain, the numbers who believe the climate isn't changing at all rose from 4% to 19% between 2005 and 2013. (*Climate Change Deniers Have Grasped That Markets Can't Fix The Climate* by **Seumas Milne)**
Hourglass (*Informational + Personal*)	Just over a decade ago, for a year, I lived in South Africa. No, alas, this isn't a column about Nelson Mandela, which I'm sure will be a disappointment, because there haven't really been enough of those, have there? No, it's about plastic bags. Because South African supermarkets, you see, were utterly mad for them. According to an unpublished report by the Environment Agency a few years ago (leaked in various papers) you would have to use a canvas bag a quite startling 171 times for it to have less environmental impact than a new plastic one every day. Has anybody? Ever? Part of me wonders if the hidden cost of Ireland's successful war on plastic bags is a secret, guilty, canvas overload, bursting out of the cupboard under every sink. (*Our plastic bag addiction is choking the planet* by **Hugo Rifkind**)
Narrative (*Personal*)	My husband and I stopped playing each other at tennis. Too nasty. If I managed to scrape ahead he'd sledge mercilessly until I double-faulted on set point. Now our rivalry has been redirected into, well, anything. Even sitting on a beach at Easter he invented a game in which we lobbed pebbles at a can. He beat me, but too narrowly for his liking: "Best of three?" (*Competition is good for a marriage, royal or not* by **Janice Turner**)

Table 93. *Writing Style in Saudi Opinion Columns*

Writing Style	***Saudi Columnists***
Inverted Pyramid (*Informational +Factual*)	Charity work is still below the level of expectations in terms of both quantity and quality. If we compare the numbers of registered charities with that of a country like the United States, which has over 1.8 million charity organizations — the city of New York alone has more than 98,000 active foundations — we would sense the urgent need for increasing the number of working charities in the Kingdom. The vital role and main objective for the existence of our charities lack the much-needed efficiency and training and that is required of these organizations. Their members lack most of the skills and scientific knowledge in disciplines that are required in order to work in the field of organized charities. (*Charity vs. Philanthropy in Saudi Arabia* by **Mohammed AlSaif)**
Hourglass (*Informational + Personal*)	Sometimes I wonder about what formula other countries use to force their people to respect the rights of pedestrians. Although there is no point in comparing ourselves to people in other countries, but for the sake of making a point, let me do it here. In Dubai, I saw a sign placed by the traffic department in the city. The sign read that anyone attempting to cross the road from any place other than the designated area would be fined AED200. Why can't this be applied in our city? We are so used to violating rules that when we see a sign like this we would, I believe, start laughing while some would complain. Crossing the roads in Saudi Arabia is a suicide mission. A person will have to be on high alert and grab his thobe by the mouth and should turn like Carl Lewis at any second. He would also need to measure the speed of the cars and gaps in between and then calculate his speed to see whether he could cross or not. It is a 50 percent chance that he might make it. The safest way for a person to cross is to beg and wave his hands with a smile to get permission to cross. This, however, should not be the case. (*Our Missing Rights as Pedestrians* by **Mahmoud Ahmad**)
Narrative (*Personal*)	I arrived at Dubai airport last week with my daughter. It was around midnight and I waited in line for a taxi, like I would do in any other country. When my turn came, I was surprised to see a lady standing near the cab, wearing a uniform, similar to the one worn by flight attendants, with Dubai's Road and Transport Authority badge on it. After checking that I've put my luggage in the trunk, she sat behind the wheel and drove. **(***Saudi women victims of 'restriction for protection'* by **Badria Al-Bishr)**

Despite the fact that the formal style is characteristic of newspaper language, columnists tend to obtain a degree of informality in their opinion pieces. Informal style is characterized by "slang, contractions, colloquial expressions, shortened word forms, incomplete sentences and a casual conversational tone" (Kriszner & Mandell, 1994, p. 214). The analysis of both corpora revealed that both columnists showed a similarity of style use and both combined both formal and informal style in their opinion texts as the Table (94) and Fig. (63) illustrate:

Table 94. *Formal and Informal Style in British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

Informal Style	***British Columnists***	***Percentage***	***Per 1000 Words***	***Saudi Columnists***	***Percentage***	***Per 1000 Words***
First and Second Person Pronouns I **and** *You*	2414	11%	15.600	1160	8%	9.747
Short Forms	554	3%	3.580	71	1%	0.596
Colloquialism	215	1%	1.400	0	0%	0
Conversational Expressions *I mean, you know*	230	1%	1.486	0	0%	0
Active Voice	16864	84%	109	12719	91%	106.87
Total	**20277**	**59%**	**131**	**13950**	**40%**	**117**
Formal Style	***British Columnists***	***Percentage***	***Per 1000 Words***	***Saudi Columnists***	***Percentage***	***Per 1000 Words***
Third Person *The writer, The columnist*	3	0%	0.01	1	0%	0
Long Forms	746	17%	4.819	1976	44%	16.605
Technical Terms	40	1%	0.25	23	0%	0.26
Passive Voice	3218	73%	21	2382	53%	20
Conditional *If*	418	9%	2.700	136	3%	1.142
Total	**4425**	**50%**	**28.590**	**4518**	**50%**	**37.966**

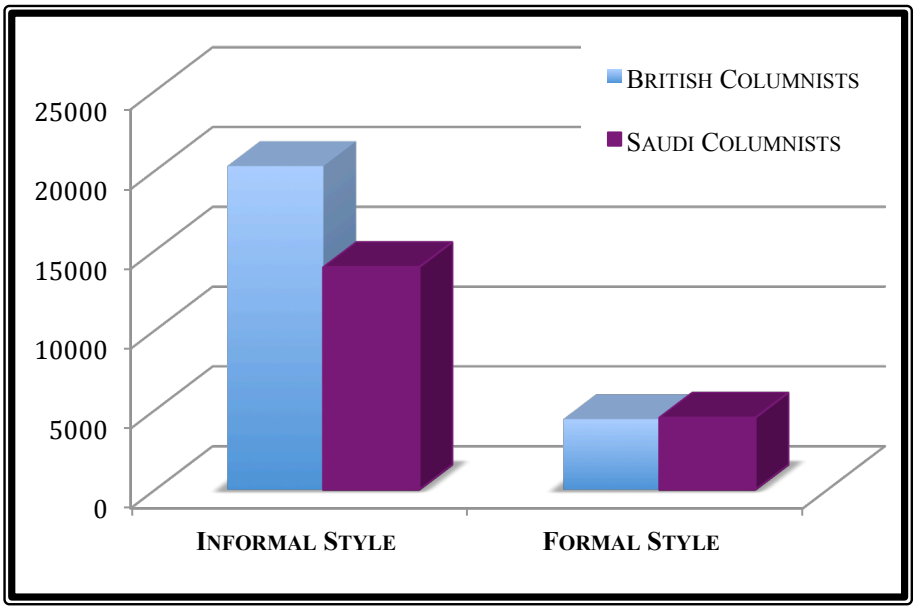


Figure 63. Distribution of Writing Style in British and Saudi Opinion Texts

In order to test the significance of difference between British and Saudi columnists regarding the use of informality of style, the Chi-Square test was also used. In Table (95), the Chi-Square value (X^2 =218.880) is meaningful at α level (α = 0.05) with a degree of freedom of 1 (DF=1). This indicates that there is a highly statistically significant difference between Saudi and British in their use of informal style, with British writers tending to be more informal in their texts than Saudi writers.

Table 95. ***Results of Chi-test of British and Saudi Columnists' Use of Style***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	1	218.880	5.3963	**X^2 < 3.84**
N of Valid Cases	43170			

Level of Significance = 3.84

Generally, findings showed that both groups of writers used a mixture of the two styles: a little more informal with some topics and a little more formal with other topics. British columnists adopted a more informal style than their Saudi counterparts. British writers use more often *first person pronouns*, *more colloquial terms*, *more short forms*, *more conversational expressions*, and *more short sentences*. They set out to write about a certain issue from a personal subjective view using a friendly informal style. Informal style is more direct, more accessible to readers, and more familiar to the general public. British writers also maintain a more formal style with topics related to politics, finance, education, and history.

In comparison with British columnists, Saudi columnists often preferred a formal style in their opinion texts. In most Saudi columns, the formal Standard English sentences with standard grammatical structures occur side by side with long forms, long sentences, and avoidance of colloquialism and conversational expressions. Saudi columnists often state the main points of a topic and offer support arguments. They observed grammatical rules scrupulously and write with an impersonal, objective tone. The information is presented in a manner that is both readable and interesting. The following extracts from the corpus illustrate the use of formal and informal style:

Informal Style

But today is different. Today is glorious occasion of becoming Poland country of most spoken language in England, not is count English. Also not is count Welsh. Which is confuse Polish mans, because if 562,000 peoples is speak Welsh as big main language, and only 546,000 is speak Polish then is Polish third biggest, logical. But is count second biggest in census 2011 form- filling time waste, because is most of 562,000 Welsh-speaking mans live in Wales, which isn't count. But if Wales isn't count, why is even speak about Wales? What is Wales have to do with anything? Where even is Wales? I have seeing Prince of Wales in the television and he is relevant in world affairs similar exact with current Queen of Poland (which isn't actual exist — I am make here satirical point). Welsh, ha! I am tell you somethings for nothing: nobody is row 200 miles across actual hard solid ground for arrive in Wales. So today I am celebrate Polish is become number two language entire of England not count Wales by write whole opinion column topical observation of week's news for first time in actual Polish language. Though is halfway through and still isn't properly started talk about important things.

(*Today I am make first column in Polski* **by Giles Coren)**

Fancy a slice of revenge? Or just some fun pranking friends? Either way, now for less than a tenner your worst impulses can be indulged. Here's something to make you wish you'd crunched down on that cyanide capsule a bit sooner – people are buying and selling positive pregnancy tests on the internet. What began on – where else? – Craigslist in the US, has crossed the urine-infused pond and arrived here. It's an industry that has been booming in the States for some time. Some of the tests are proper "joke" ones, manufactured and packaged and – as a quick search on YouTube, Instagram and Twitter shows – used as such, with variously hilarious and/or distressing results. As well as the ones that already show a false positive result (for brandishing aloft once you emerge from the loo), there are tests designed to show a positive result whoever wees on them. These are equal-opportunity gags – a man can give one to his partner and fool her into thinking she's pregnant rather than the other way around. What japes!

(*False Positive Pregnancy Tests: For Sale on the Internet* by **Lucy Mangan**)

- First & Second Person Pronouns
- Violations of Grammar Rules
- Active Voice
- Short Forms
- Colloquialism
- Conversational Expressions

Formal Style

In an age that is characterized, in certain ways, by increasing isolation, new technologies that support social networking may work powerfully to ameliorate alienation by forming bonds. But human nature is not uniformly benevolent, and that, too, is reflected and intensified by the presence and influence of social media. We have all heard incidents of nasty, harmful rumors being spread by social media. The technology seems to bring us closer, and in a sense, it may be that people are just doing what they have always done. But the power of this medium is unprecedented, as is its durability. A word spoken in person or over telephone lasts only a minute but messages on social media, as far as we know right now, potentially lasts forever. I believe that social media is no passing fad. Every sign indicates that it is here to stay, and as such, it is very much in our interest to educate and protect ourselves and our children while navigating these new communication channels. More than anything else, we have a personal obligation to act honorably online as we do offline. Oscar Wilde said, "Give a man a mask, and he will tell you the truth." Social media, with its anonymous aspects, provides such a mask.

(*Judging the Pros and Cons of Social Media by* **Alaa AlGhamdi**)

Laughter is a universal language that reflects the feeling or state of enjoyment, and is associated with feelings of well being. The feeling of well-being is one of the basic identifiable emotions that is shared by all humans, such as amusement, anger, fear and sadness; it exists in all cultures to varying degrees. However, laughter is one of the most undervalued and underrated tools in society. The International Congress of Humor found that laughter has decreased 66–82% worldwide from what it was in the 1950s. In the 1950s, people laughed on average 18 times a day. Nowadays, the average is between 4–6 times a day. Thus, laughter needs to be promoted in societies to help people function well emotionally, socially, psychologically, and physically, as well brighten our outlook on life. Medically, laughter reduces blood concentration of the stress hormone cortisol. Laughter also makes our immune system stronger, improves the flow of oxygen to the heart and brain, and lowers blood pressure by increasing blood flow. Socially, laughter is a reflection of mirror neurons in our brains that allow us to visualize and empathize with people. Neurons help us to empathize with and understand people in order to strengthen relationships, to affirm positive feelings about others, and to express those feelings externally.

(*Prompting Laughter in Society* **by Dr. Khalid Al-Seghayer)**

- Long Forms
- Technical Terms
- Reference
- Passive Voice
- Standard Grammatical Structures

7.6. British and Saudi Use of Selected Linguistic Features

The quantitative analysis of this study also focused on the frequency of specific linguistic features in order to find possible differences or similarities between the opinion texts of British and Saudi writers. The analysis identifies the frequencies of the following linguistic features: *pronouns, gender nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, articles, numerical terms, prepositions,* and *conjunctions*. Findings revealed that both groups of writers show a linguistic similarity in the normalized frequencies of these linguistics items as shown in the following table and chart:

Table 96. *Frequencies of Linguistic Features in British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

Linguistic Features	***British Columnists***	***Percentage***	***Per 1000 Words***	***Saudi Columnists***	***Percentage***	***Per 1000 Words***
Pronouns	10015	13%	64.707	7177	10%	60.310
Gender Nouns	2649	4%	17.115	2654	5%	22.302
Adjectives	7487	8%	48.374	6791	10%	56.815
Verbs	20082	26%	129.751	15100	21%	126.890
Adverbs	6274	8%	40.536	4230	6%	35.546
Swear words	55	0%	0.36	2	0%	0.01
Articles	12431	3%	80.317	10467	15%	87.957
Numerical Terms	1225	3%	7.91	255	0.36%	2.142
Conjunctions	7794	10%	46.526	6995	10%	58.915
Prepositions	18935	25%	122.340	16643	23%	131.865
Total	**86947**	**55%**	**561.771**	**70314**	**44%**	**590.873**

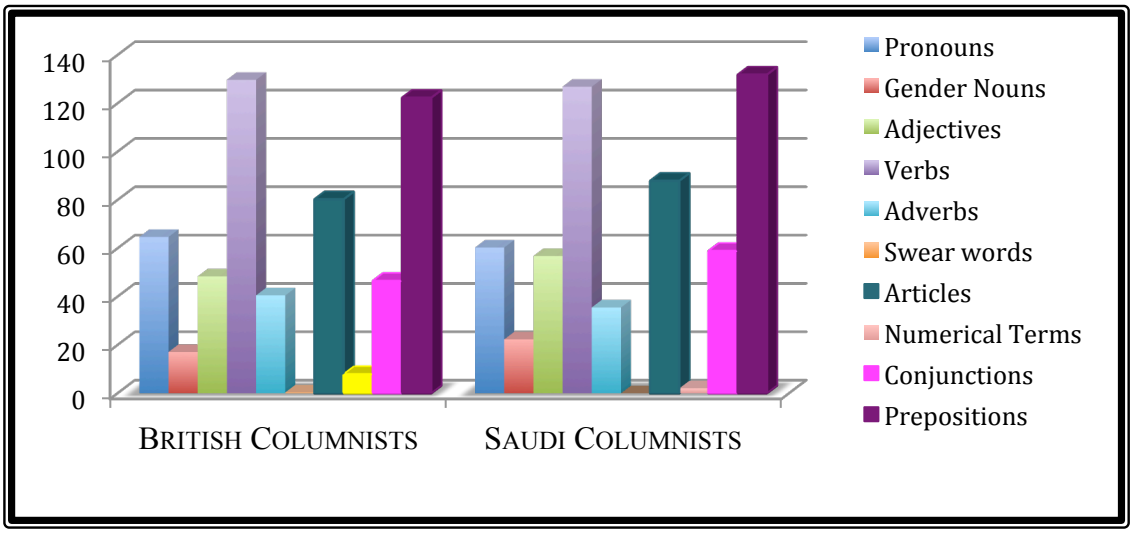


Figure 64. Distribution of Linguistic Features in British and Saudi Opinion Texts

Chi-Square test was also run to find out if there is any significant difference between British and Saudi writers regarding their overall use of the above linguistic features. Statistical results revealed that the significance level is (X^2 = 918.353< 30.144), as shown in Table (97), and this indicated that the differences between opinion writers in the overall use of linguistic features are statistically significant.

Table 97. ***Results of Chi-test of British and Saudi Columnists' Use of Linguistic Features***

P	df	Test Statistic	P-Value	
0.05	19	918.353	6.867	$X^2 < 30.144$
N of Valid Cases	**157261**			

Level of Significance = 30.144

As displayed in the above figures, findings showed that there is a statistically significant difference between the opinion texts of both writers regarding the use of these linguistic features in terms of their overall frequencies. In spite of that, both British and Saudi columnists showed a very similar use in the normalized frequencies of pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, gender nouns, articles, conjunctions, and prepositions. The frequencies of numerical terms and swear words is the only case, which showed a slight difference between the two groups. Swear words displayed a very low frequency of occurrence in Saudi texts due to cultural religious restrictions.

These results provide a tangible proof that Saudi writers possess excellent command of English language and strong writing skills. They showed proficiency and a unique expertise in this type of journalistic discourse similar to native-speakers. Saudi writers are quite aware of the standards of the English language and they are keen in using them to

attract readers and communicate their messages successfully. It is worth mentioning that most of the Saudi columnists are highly educated and working in academia.

General Summary of Findings

- Results revealed that both types of metadiscourse devices, interactive and interactional, are present in both British and Saudi opinion texts.
- Generally, British and Saudi columnists showed almost identical frequency in the normalized totals of metadiscourse resources.
- Findings using Chi-Square test showed statistically significant differences between British and Saudi writers in their use of metadiscourse resources, interactive and interactional.
- Findings also reported statistically significant differences between British and Saudi opinion texts in their use of *transition markers, frame markers, attitude markers, boosters, code glosses* and *engagement markers*.
- Statistical findings provided evidence that British and Saudi writers of opinion columns use most of the sub-categories of metadiscourse significantly differently, with British writers using a higher frequency of *frame markers*, *boosters*, and *engagement markers*, and Saudi writers using a higher frequency of *transition markers* and *code glosses*.
- There are some differences in the format of opinion columns with Saudi columnists following the typical layout of columns and British columnists using subheadings, paragraph headings, images and photographs.

- In terms of syntax, Saudi columnists preferred more nominal groups in the headlines of their opinion columns, whereas British columnists tended to form headlines in complete sentences.
- British and Saudi writers do share a lot of column topics and both write about similar concerns and current affairs but the writing of each is different as it is based mostly on cultural background.
- British writers tended to use more short forms and colloquial expressions than Saudi writers. In contrast, Saudi writers used more long forms, more cultural terms, and more idiomatic expressions than British counterparts.
- Saudi opinion columns tended to be more formal and slightly less personal than British opinion columns in which writers preferred a more informal and friendly style.
- Both groups of writers showed a close similarity in their opinion columns regarding the use of linguistic features, rhetorical devices, and journalistic writing style.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter has provided a thorough presentation of the results of the comparative analysis between British and Saudi newspaper opinion columns regarding the use of metadiscourse and selected textual linguistic features. It also offered a graphic presentation of all the frequencies of metadiscourse for each of the groups studied. The first part of the chapter presented the detailed results of the quantitative analysis of metadiscourse resources and showed how British and Saudi writers differ quantitatively in

their use of most of the sub-categories of metadiscourse. This difference has been statistically tested using Chi-square test and statistical findings have been given. The second part of the chapter compared and contrasted British and Saudi newspaper opinion columns in terms of text layout, headlines structure, topic choice, writing style, use of rhetorical devices and selected linguistic features. Tabulated results of the comparative analysis along with examples from the corpus were provided in most of the cases.

The next chapters will discuss the results of the quantitative analysis of this study that are related to, first: the use of metadiscourse resources in newspaper column writing and second: gender. The research questions will be addressed, interpretative explanation of results will be offered, and key findings will be compared with relevant literature.

VIII. Chapter Eight

Discussion

Part I

8.0. Introduction

One of the ultimate goals of this study was to explore gender variation in newspaper opinion columns and a major question was about the presence of gender-based differences in this journalistic discourse. This chapter addresses this broad question about how differently men and women use language and discusses key findings of possible gender differences in the use of metadiscourse resources and certain linguistic features in newspaper opinion texts. Gender influence on the use of metadiscourse devices is a significant factor in language research "the gender of the writer could influence how much or what type of metadiscourse is used" (Ädel 2006, p. 198). The first section of this chapter responds to this question and discusses the role of gender differences in applying metadiscourse markers in newspaper opinion columns. Findings give some support to current views of gender which suggest that there is no one-to-one relation between gender and language. Generally, both male and female columnists in both groups showed more similarities than differences in their overall use of metadiscourse and this confirmed that the genre of the discourse seems to have more impact than the gender of the columnist on their linguistic choices. Despite that, gender seems to be an important variable in the sub-categories of metadiscourse where clear patterns of gender-preferential differences have been found. A detailed discussion of the sub-categories of metadiscourse with several examples from both corpora are provided and the corresponding literature is presented. The second section of the chapter addresses the impact of gender in relation to the use of linguistic features, topic choice and writing style. Findings provided clear evidence of gender-based variations between male and female columnists regarding their linguistic, topical, and stylistic choices. These findings are discussed in the light of previous research and possible interpretations are offered. Gender-based difference is evident in the journalistic

discourse of opinion columns and this aligns with the findings of previous studies in most of the cases.

8.1. Discussion

One of the purposes of this quantitative study was to determine whether significant gender differences exist in the genre of newspaper opinion writing. Results obtained from investigating various linguistic devices in 320 opinion columns from 4 leading newspapers found that there are possible differences between men and women in language use. The following table presents a review of the results of the use of metadiscourse markers by male and female writers in both British and Saudi corpora:

Table 98. *Overall Frequencies of Metadiscourse Resources in British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

Categories		British						Saudi					
		Male			Female			Male			Female		
		Total Items	F Per 1000 Words	P	Total Items	F Per 1000 Words	P	Total Items	F Per 1000 Words	P	Total Items	F Per 1000 Words	P
INTERACTIVE	Transitions	3502	43. 123	80.45%	3209	43. 621	80.58%	2964	51.391	79%	3137	51.153	81%
	Frame Markers	505	6.218	11.60%	441	5.994	11.07%	249	4.317	6.63%	263	4.288	6.78%
	Endophoric Markers	18	0.221	0.41%	8	0.108	0.20%	22	0.381	0.58%	8	0.130	0.20%
	Evidentials	139	1.711	3.19%	126	1.712	3.16%	90	1.560	2.39%	48	0.782	1.22%
	Code Glosses	189	2.327	4.34%	198	2.691	5%	428	7.420	11.40%	419	6.832	11%
	Total	**4353**	**53. 602**	**52.22%**	**3982**	**54.129**	**47.77%**	**3753**	**65.071**	**49.20%**	**3875**	**63.187**	**50.79%**
INTERACTIONAL	Hedges	1561	19.222	29.61%	1309	16.79	22.33%	1014	17.581	28.16%	882	14.382	26%
	Boosters	793	9.764	16.07%	842	11.445	14.36%	462	8.010	12.83%	445	7.256	13.09 %
	Attitude Markers	145	1.78	3%	120	1.631	2.04%	163	2.826	4.52%	125	2.038	3.67%
	Self-mentions	1257	15.478	25.48%	1968	26.752	33.57%	1138	19.731	31.61%	1019	16.616	29.87%
	Engagement Markers	1277	15.724	25.88%	1622	22.048	27.67%	823	14.269	0.69%	926	15.099	27.25%
	Total	**5033**	**61.975**	**45.70%**	**5861**	**79.672**	**54.29%**	**3600**	**62.418**	**51.45%**	**3397**	**55.393**	**48.54%**
Total		**9386**	**115.578**	**48.81%**	**9843**	**133.80**	**51.18%**	**7353**	**127.49**	**50.27%**	**7272**	**118.58**	**49.72%**

The quantitative analysis of the overall data confirmed that male and female writers of both groups shared more similarities than differences in their use of metadiscourse markers in opinion columns. The distributions in the above table showed that male and female columnists in both groups used interactive metadiscourse markers in very similar ways, suggesting that both writers are concerned about the readers' comprehension, making them more able to follow the exposition and recover the intended meanings of the texts. This finding of similarity of use of interactive metadiscourse in newspaper column writing supports previous research Francis *et al*., (2001) and Tse & Hyland (2006). Francis *et al*. (2001) investigated the extent to which gender appears to impact male and female students' academic writing styles and argued that the academic writing of men and women exhibits far more similarities than differences. Tse & Hyland (2006) analyzed gender preferences in the use of metadiscourse and found that frequencies of interactive metadiscourse were similar for both genders in academic writing. According to them, "The ways men and women use a language are not determined by their gender but constructed, negotiated, and transformed through social practices informed by particular social settings, relations of power, and participation in disciplinary discourses" (p.15). It can be concluded that gender does not seem to be a key variable in columnists' interactive choices as the similarity in these interactive markers in opinion columns is highly influenced by the genre's conventions. Also, the fact that opinion columns tend to be a typical short genre possibly accounts for the less frequent use of these text structuring interactive metadiscourse markers.

Regarding interactional metadiscourse, it is possible to identify some gender-preferential uses of these interactional metadiscourse. Results revealed that British female writers tended to use more interactional metadiscourse markers than male

writers, while the reverse is true for Saudi writers. British female writers employed a total of **5861** (79.672 *per 1000 words*) interactional metadiscourse devices, whereas British male writers employed a total of **5033** (61.975 *per 1000 words*) metadiscourse devices. The difference of use of interactional markers between the two genders was found to be statistically significant. In contrast, Saudi male writers employed more interactional metadiscourse than female writers in most categories especially in their use of hedges and self-mentions.

The following sections provide a detailed discussion of the results of the sub-categories of the two dimensions of metadiscourse: interactive and interactional and present how they are sometimes being used differently by both genders in the two groups of writers. Generally, of these sub-categories, the higher use of self-mentions and engagement markers by British female writers is the most obvious gender difference in the corpus.

Transitions, these interactive forms are used to "signal the arrangement of texts in a way which reflects the writer's appreciation of the reader's likely knowledge and understandings. This influences the 'reader friendliness' of a text and primarily involves the management of information flow" (Tse and Hyland, 2008, p.1242). Transitions are the most frequently used sub-category of metadiscourse in the corpus and both male and female writers in both groups used transitions as the most portion. Male and female writers in both groups showed strong similarity in the use of transitions in their opinion articles. The normalized results showed an almost identical number of tokens of transitions in the texts of male and female writers, as the previous table illustrates. Such results are quite expected since the principal concern of

columnists is to present their arguments clearly, explicitly and persuasively. High frequencies of transition markers in the corpus provide strong evidence of writers' concern with guiding the readers and making arguments clear and reflect the careful crafting of a coherent and persuasive journalistic discourse. This result is in agreement with Francis *et al*. (2001); Tse and Hyland (2006); and D'Angelo (2008). All these studies supported the idea that men's and women's writing have more similarities than differences.

It is possible to conclude that the use of transitions does not seem to be influenced by the gender of the writer, since both genders in both groups showed a similar pattern of use in their columns. The following extracts from the corpus display the use of transitions by both genders in both groups:

- Students need a natural setting to help them acquire the language more effectively, consisting of an environment where they hear, are exposed to, and interact with the target language properly. As a result, when students are outside class, they will encounter the same or similar experiences as those they had in the classroom. In contrast, if a teacher tends to teach by relying on the students' native language, students are learning in a less effective environment, because most students believe that classrooms should be very real and authentic places. They expect to go to class to hear and use the language in a meaningful way.

(*Using Arabic to teach English in Saudi public schools* By **Dr. Khalid Al-Seghayer)**

- I had never before thought of slavery as a state of terror. Terror obviously, in its full brutality, capriciousness and suffering for slaves. Yet terror of a sort for slave owners, too. For the sake of a gracious house, a silk gown and indolence, you lived with the perpetual fear of being killed in your bed. Therefore you must pass down the terror to dispirit your would-be murderers. Thus you live amid constant violence, blood-lust, ugliness and hate.

(*High Heels Always Leave Me with a Low Feeling* By **Janice Turner)**

Frame markers, are features that order arguments in the immediate texts such as *first, to summarize*, *in conclusion* (Hyland, 2005a). These devices refer to discourse acts, sequences, stages, goals and topic shifts. Male and female writers in both groups again displayed similar frequencies in their usage of these markers. Results showed

that frame markers employed by both genders in both groups were almost the same, even the sub-categories of frame markers were employed in similar ways by both genders. Both genders in both groups showed similar ways in using devices to label stages, announce goals and shift topics in their opinion texts. This finding suggests that the genre of the journalistic discourse rather than the gender of the writer determines the use and the distribution of frame markers in newspaper opinion columns. This finding coincides with previous research of metadiscourse: Hyland (2004); Francis *et al*. (2001); and Tse and Hyland (2008). Hyland's study (2004), reported that frame markers in dissertations showed more similarities and little variation across six disciplines. Francis *et al*. (2001) asserted that there are more similarities than differences in the academic writing of men and women. Tse and Hyland (2008) reported that men and women displayed similarities in their usage of frame markers in academic book reviews. British and Saudi men and women writers used these text-structuring devices to sequence, label text stages, announce goals, and indicate topic shifts as the following extracts illustrate:

- There's been a lot of focus of late on the weirdy-weirdos who send rape threats on Twitter, and rightly so. But much of the coverage makes several misguided assumptions. First, that angry misogynists only communicate on Twitter (allow me to introduce you to something called Reddit). Second, that this is a man-versus-woman thing. Some of the angriest messages I've ever received on the internet have come from women, usually telling me how ugly I am. Lovely to meet you, too! And third, that legislating against

(*How to Use the Internet Without Being a Total Loser* By **Hadley Freeman**)

- The unreasonableness of the person's call and his rationale behind it made us realize that it would be futile to argue with this person. At that stage it would be better for all to call it a case closed. For the racist person not only represented himself, but also felt that his actions were right. While incidents of racism are certainly prevalent in our society, as in every society, it would be unfair to label our entire society as racist. That's the argument I would like to present. I would also like to state that those who are or have become racist are the products of "indirect" education. By "indirect", I mean that at family or school level they are told or made to feel superior.

(Most Saudis Are Not Racist, but Racism Still Exists By **Mahmoud Ahmad)**

Endophoric Markers, are expressions which refer to other parts of a text in order to facilitate the reader's comprehension and to support argument by referring to earlier material (Wagner and Cheng, 2016). Results revealed endophoric markers were the least frequently used metadiscourse in the corpus. Both male and female writers in both groups used lower similar frequencies of endophoric markers and no gender difference was identified. This finding is not surprising due to the genre conventions and the short nature of opinion texts. In fact, columnists do not need to refer readers to other sources for further information as in academic discourse and textbooks. Instead, columnists in their short texts build their credibility through their personal experience and personal background. It is possible to say that endophoric markers are not a feature of the journalistic discourse of opinion columns. They are largely a feature of science and engineering texts, and writing of hard disciplines (Hyland, 2005a). The following examples display the use of these referential devices:

- Statistics such as those mentioned above — ones that point out social inequalities or negative events — usually stem, at some point, from academic studies. These studies may be misquoted or quoted selectively; key terms may not be carefully defined. They may confuse rather than illuminate. However, I do not believe they are as harmful as another set of statistics, those delivered to us on a regular basis by the media.

(*Statistics Create Stories Where None May Exist* **By Alaa AlGhamdi)**

- Many have suggested that the reason catwalks and magazines are so white is because designers and editors are often white, but I suspect the phrase "follow the money" is more relevant. As I said earlier, Asian models have become more prominent with the rise of the Asian market for luxury goods. Same with Russian models.

(*Why Black Models are Rarely in Fashion* By **Hadley Freeman**)

Evidentials, this category of interactive metadiscourse refers to referencing and the ways writers use citations. Evidentials indicate the source of knowledge, and the writer’s degree of certainty about the proposition discussed (Ifantidou, 2001). Results showed that men and women writers in both groups displayed similar low frequencies

in their usage of evidentials. No significant gender difference was found between male and female writers in both groups regarding the use of evidentials. In both sets of the corpus, 'quotations' were the most frequently used evidential markers followed by references to studies and surveys. Low frequency of evidentials is due to the fact that the genre of opinion columns, as a journalistic discourse, does not require documentation and citation as academic writing. Instead, columnists write freely relying on their personal experiences to support their arguments and claims. The following extracts display the use of evidential markers:

- But now men are being informed that their bodies have clocks too. A study at Indiana University and the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm suggests that the children of fathers over 45 have a 3.5 times greater risk of autism, 2.5 times of ADHD and are 25 times more likely to be bipolar than those born to a 24-year-old man.

(*Older Mothers aren't Freaks, They're Fabulous* **By Janice Turner)**

- Probably the best way to simplify the definition of e-government is this: "Any use of information and technology that empowers citizens, improves the way government works, improves the connection and communication between governments and civil society can be considered as part of e-government." This is according to Sharon Dawes, a senior fellow at the US-based Center for Technology in Government.

(*E-government with love!* By **Hussein Shobokshi)**

Code Glosses, these interactive devices "supply additional information by rephrasing, explaining or elaborating what has been said, to ensure the reader to recover the writer's intended meaning" (Hyland, 2005a, p. 52). Results revealed that code glosses seem to appear more in Saudi corpus more than British corpus. Findings also showed that no significant gender difference was identified in the usage of code glosses in both groups. Both male and female writers showed almost equality in their linguistic choices of code glosses in order to facilitate the interpretation of the message conveyed. The present result is in line with Tse and Hyland's (2006) study, who found

that female and male writers showed the same pattern of use regarding this interactive category in their academic reviews.

Higher frequencies of code glosses in Saudi texts suggest that both male and female Saudi writers tended to be more concerned with readers' comprehension, and directing them to recover the writer's intended meaning. This is quite expected from the Saudi columnists since they are writing for the general public whose mother tongue is not English. In spite of the similarity of use of code glosses, it is interesting to note that male writers tended to rely more on exemplification, whereas female writers tended more to reformulate their statements to ensure that readers get their intended meaning. This corresponds to Tse and Hyland's (2006) study, where male reviewers used more examples and women reviewers often reformulate their propositions. The following extracts from the corpus illustrate this difference and show how columnists use reformulation and exemplification markers to restate their ideational information:

- The other significant finding is that those who were most affected by envy and other negative emotions were those who tended to have little or no active use of Facebook for interpersonal communication. In other words those who use Facebook like a magazine, browsing through it, looking at images, reading other people's posts, noting other people's activities, are those who tend to come out of their Facebook sessions with negative emotions. The researchers went further and found that the negative emotions provoked during the Facebook sessions then fed into dissatisfaction with life in general. In other words, they found a strong negative link between Facebook envy and dissatisfaction with life.

(*How Facebook Fuels Envy* By **Imane Kurdi)**

- While opinion polls find opposition to immigration in general, the CFE found that four times as many Britons thought immigrant entrepreneurs made a positive contribution to the UK than made a negative one (45 per cent to 11 per cent). This isn't the first opinion poll to find that the British people may not much like immigration in the abstract but are sympathetic to it when it's broken down in terms of, for example, providing nurses for the NHS or highly trained engineers to fill industrial skills gaps. The immigration disliked by the public is lower-skill immigration. In so far as people believe this kind of immigration brings any benefits they believe that the cost is too great. What the rich might gain in terms of cheaper domestic staff, for example, the poor lose in terms of depressed wages and in competition for public services and housing.

(*Can the Rest of Britain Compete with London?* By **Tim Montgomerie**)

Hedges, are words or phrases that express caution as they qualify or soften claims by suggesting that they are not necessarily proven or true in every case (Aull, 2015). Findings revealed that male writers in both groups made slightly higher use of hedges than their counterparts in their opinion columns. This difference of use of hedges was found to be statistically significant. British male writers tended to hedge more (1561. 19 *per 1000 words*), compared to female writers (1309. 16 *per 1000 words*). Similarly, Saudi male writers used more hedges (1014. 17 *per 1000 words*), than their female counterparts (882. 14 *per 1000 words*). Writers used this interactional strategy to express tentativeness or cautiousness regarding the truth of their claims, present propositions as opinions rather than facts (Hyland, 1998), "avoid responsibilty of their claims, and gain acceptance for their work" (Hyland, 2000, p. 179). This finding goes along with Crismore *et al*. (1993) who found that Finnish males used higher frequencies of hedges than females and that males were more cautious in expressing their opinion in persuasive writing. It is also in line with D'Angelo (2008), who reported that male writers used more hedges than females in academic writing.

This finding is also against the widespread belief that women use more hedges and that the use of hedges is a marker of 'powerless language' (Markkanen and Schröder, 1997). It is not in accordance with Lakoff's theory (1975), who claimed that women more frequently than men use hedges and tag questions. According to her, hedging is a reflection of a lack of self-confidence and a marker of inferiority. The lesser use of hedges in female texts probably indicates that women in both groups hold a strong commitment to their claims and wished to be viewed as intelligent, knowledgeable and influential as their male counterparts. In other words, female writers, especially Saudi, were not hesitant to express their opinions and were more certain on their beliefs by using less hedges. Women in both groups wish to communicate their views and want

their voices to be heard. The following extracts display the use of hedging by male and female columnists:

- Statistics seem to hold a mirror up to us and perhaps we tend to believe them precisely because that mirror is not always flattering. The numerical facts are like a bitter pill that enlightenment demands that we swallow, for our own betterment. One in four women have experienced sexual assault at some point in their lives. One in five children have gone to bed hungry. These are the statistics that reproach us; that give voice to what has for too long been hidden and that spur us on to improve. Are they reliable statistics? I would venture to say that they are probably not.

(*Statistics Create Stories Where None May Exist* **by Alaa AlGhamdi, A Saudi Male Writer)**

- Makers of films captioned as "true stories" claim either that fabrications do not matter as they are "just making movies", or that they are justified in a higher cause. Yet they can hardly be both. Cinema in my view is the defining cultural form of the age. It deserves to be taken seriously, and therefore to be criticised for shortcomings. If the most celebrated of "docudramas", Spielberg's Schindler's List, could go to lengths to authenticate its storyline, why should not any film claiming truth to history? Fiction may be free and facts expensive, but film-makers are not short of researchers. Commentators may be accused of choosing facts to prove their opinions – plague the thought – but that is different from falsification.

(*Should 'true story' films such as Zero Dark Thirty and Argo be rated L for lie?* By **Simon Jenkins, A British Male Writer**)

- Mindfulness is both astonishingly simple and, for most of us who live in our heads, very difficult. It is also immensely rewarding, as plenty of people are discovering. I would argue that it is probably the most important life skill I am learning (after 15 years of practice, I am acutely aware that there is always more to learn). It is up there with reading, and probably in my old age with eyesight gone, it will prove more valuable to me than books.

(*Why We Will Come to See Mindfulness as Mandatory* By **Madeleine Bunting, A Female British Writer**)

- Wearing a uniform is one thing, but ordaining what color lipstick to wear or paying staff to buy red underwear so that it does not show under a red shirt is surely a step too far. Surely that is a personal choice. Which brings me to uniforms and dress codes as a whole. Perhaps because I have never worn one, I feel uncomfortable with the idea of a uniform. It is not the uniform per se, but the idea of taking away a woman's choice to present herself as she wishes, be that in full hijab or in a work suit. In my view, that should remain a personal choice, or else it has no meaning.

(*Red Lines and Red Lipstick* By **Imane Kurdi, A Saudi Female Writer**)

Boosters, allow writers to express conviction and assert a proposition with confidence (Hyland, 2000). These certainty markers strengthen the writer's claims and show involvement or solidarity with the reader. Boosting is accomplished with the use of adverbs, verbs, and adverbials such as *clearly, undoubtedly, obviously, certain, believe, sure*…etc. Boosters denote the writer's assertive voice silencing competing views, with the effect of narrowing down the space for alternative, let alone conflicting opinions set aside through particularly confident voice (Emeren & Garssen, 2012). Results revealed that male and female writers in both groups actually used similar rates of boosting devices in their opinion texts and no signifcant gender difference was found. Both men and women in the British group used higher frequencies of boosters compared to the Saudi group, and this result suggests that British writers are showing a high degree of certainty and a strong voice of authority. In contrast, Saudi writers generally tended to disguise their social responsibililty and their authorial identities through using fewer boosters and more hedges. The fact that Saudi writers, both genders, boost less often may be due to socio-cultural and religious regulations such as the restriction on freedom of expression especially since "Saudi press opinion writers and columnists have the greatest influence along with those expressing free opinion" (Thompson, 2014, p.140). However, this finding of similarity of use of boosters emphasizes that gender does not make a difference in writers' choices of these emphatic markers. This result ran against the findings of Crismore *et al*. (1993), Francis *et al*. (2001), and Tse and Hyland (2008), who found that males tended to use more boosters and certainty markers than females. A possible explanation for such a similarity of use may be related to the dominance of men and their higher status in media world. Journalism is a male-dominated field and therefore female writers, especically Saudi women, are trying as hard as they can to project a confident

masculine style. The following extracts from the corpus display the use of boosting devices:

- Obviously black as a clothing colour is *de rigueur* – so slimming! – but as a skin colour it has, shall we say, struggled to be accepted by the fashion mainstream. The stupidity of all this surely does not need stating, not least because fashion fans of all colours have proven to be far more colourblind than designers and casting directors, as the popularity of Smalls and Dunn proves.

(*Why Black Models are Rarely in Fashion* By **Hadley Freeman**)

- Reflecting on the age of digital technology and the day in and day out of technological development calls to mind a line from a poem by the great Arab poet Al-Mutanabbi (915–965 CE): "The best companion in life is a book." This is because I still firmly believe that the golden age of books has not faded away, even in the current advanced technological world and regardless of the recent explosion of e-books. I believe the printed page is a sacred thing and that books indeed shape our minds and lives.

(*Books Are Still My Best Friends in The Digital Age* By **Dr. Khalid Al-Seghayer**)

- Of course, we all know that is a destructive if not fatal position for any Saudi to take. In fact, it's inexcusable and criminal for adults to turn a blind eye to children who are physically and sexually abused. There must be collaboration between the Education Ministry and the Ministry of Justice to handle complaints.

(*Child Protection a Must for Bright Future* By **Sabria Jawhar)**

Generally, both male and female writers in both groups used fewer boosters and more hedges. There is much evidence from both groups that writers in both groups tended to balance between certainty and possibility in their opinion texts. The balance of hedges and boosters in a text thus indicates to what extent "the writer is willing to entertain alternatives and so plays an important role in conveying commitment to text content and respect for readers" (Hyland, 2005a, p.53). According to Hyland (2004), the expression of conviction and caution, of certainty and doubt, is at the heart of the interaction of writing and is a major component of the rhetorical expression of the relationship between writer and reader. This combination of hedging and boosting aids persuasion and results in "objective information, subjective evaluation and interpersonal negotiation, and this can be a powerful factor in gaining acceptance for claims" (Hyland, 2005b, p.180). The following extracts from the corpus display how

writers mix hedging and boosting devices to represent their views regarding the proposed claims:

- It is perhaps inevitable that a society takes times to adjust with every new technology. I remember reading comments and concerns of people upon the introduction of the telephone, more than a 100 years ago. People feared that it would destroy family life and communication between friends and relatives — that people would start to live in a disembodied plane devoid of real human interaction. I trust this sounds as familiar to you as it did to me! And perhaps those fears were justified, and communication did grow a little bit more remote and less personal. It is certainly true, also, that early telephone systems with their ubiquitous party lines were a source of rumors, both intentional and otherwise!

(*Judging the pros and cons of social media* By **Alaa Al-Ghamdi**)

- You can scream that nothing online is secure until you are blue in the face. No one seems to believe it. Governments and corporations claim to respect data privacy, but they are babes in arms against nerds in attics, including those they employ. I am sure 2 million American officials thought their missives were safe from WikiLeaks. I am sure Whitehall ministers and officials who claimed ID-card records and NHS computers were "double-locked" may have thought so. They also thought the kit they bought from computer snake-oil sales staff would work."

(The digital revolution? It's all a gift to the power of the state By **Simon Jenkins)**

Attitude Markers, express the writer's appraisal of propositional information, conveying surprise, obligation, agreement, importance, and so on (Tse and Hyland, 2008). Results revealed that attitude markers were used with an equal low frequency in both groups by both genders. Both male and female writers were very cautious to express their opinions and attitudes explicitly to the public. Such a low frequency of use may seem to be a marker of objective, unbiased style of writing in the genre of opinion columns. It is possible to say that these stance markers are not a key feature of newspaper opinion columns where authors tended to avoid projecting themselves in their texts in favour of a more impersonal objective style. This feature confirmed that opinion columns are different from editorials which embody the newspapers' opinions and attitudes. According to Le (2006), "editorials are bound to contain a high number of attitude markers, especially those marking agreement and disagreement on what has

been done and what has happened" (p.218). Columnists typically strive to maintain objectivity in their texts and columnists' attitudes can be determined by reading several columns by the same writer.

Self-mentions, as defined by Hyland (2005a, p.53), refer to the degree of explicit author presence in the text measured by the frequency of first person pronouns and possessive adjectives. Results revealed that both male and female writers in both groups were heavy users of these explicit author references of metadiscourse and that self-mentions were by far the most frequent interactional metadiscourse markers in the corpus. The analysis confirmed that British female writers tended to use far more self-mentions (1968- 26.752 *per 1000 words*), compared to male writers (1257- 15.478 *per 1000 words*) in their opinion texts. A statistically significant difference in the use of self-mentions was found between male and female British writers, with female writers showing a higher preference for first person pronouns (*I,We, Me*). This finding is in line with Tse and Hyland (2008). According to them, female writers used more self-mentions and attitude markers in the reviews of academic books.

By employing higher frequency of self-mentions, female writers tended to establish a personal relation with their readers and create a more authoritative authorial image of themselves in their opinion texts. The first person singular pronoun 'I' employed by British female writers was the most frequently used marker in the corpus. According to Hyland (2001), "the first person assists authors to make a personal standing in their text and to demarcate their own work from that of others. It helps them distinguish who they are and what they have to say" (p. 217). Female writers often employed first person pronouns in their opinion columns to establish their authorial stance from a personal perspective and gain credit from readers. Using self-mentions often served to

illustrate the writer's personal experience or described facts about the writer. The following extracts from the corpus display how female writers project their voices in their texts and assist their opinions through the use of self-mentions:

- I don't hate high heels. I do hate that they are signifiers of female elegance when, in my experience, the vast majority of women find them extremely painful and hobbling. I also resent that the point of them seems to be to make a woman's foot look smaller: as though women didn't suffer enough criticism about their bodies, we have to deal with foot size, too? As Gob Bluth would say, come on!. I very much take your point about how many women's outfits require high heels but I think what you need to separate in your mind, Savannah, is whether you genuinely want to wear them (because they're "beautiful"), or whether you think you should, because the fashion industry and society tell you to do so.

(*Women Should Only Wear High Heels if They Really Want to* By **Hadley Freeman)**

- I will be honest: I've basically spent the past 13 years lying to my daughters about equality on TV. I suspect we're all lying to our children about equality on TV. The idea is rather like the Sasquatch – in that many believe in it, passionately; and yet the only evidence for it is a scant few minutes of footage, hotly argued over on the internet, and which mainly revolves around how much body hair the subject has. I want to see a woman's world, instead. I want something actually designed for woman, rather than grudgingly shared. All those shows – they're boys' games, built by and for boys.

(*Why Are There So Few Women on TV?* By **Caitlin Moran**)

In contrast, male writers appeared to be more objective and did not wish to express their authorial identity as the owners of claims through using less self-mentions. Employing self-mentions served to provide the writer's ideas, opinions, and arguments as the following examples illustrate:

- So, Israel is bombing Syria. What do you reckon about that? No, I don't know either. The war in Syria has special status; a situation so bad that it almost surpasses debate. Nobody knows what to do. Look, I still don't know what we should do in Syria now. Not a clue; ask somebody else. But I do think that we can look at the mess we have and learn a lesson — and that isn't simply about doing more. It might be the opposite.

(*Syria's Mess Is A Result Of Intervening Too Much* By **Hugo Rifkind)**

- The neologism "Plebgate" has studded our coverage of domestic politics for the past year, and especially the past week. I wish we journalists could resist applying the suffix "gate" to any issue of controversy, let alone scandal, but I know this is asking too much. All I can do is point to the cunning behind the coinage.

(*Thanks Go to Safire for Opening All These Gates* By **Oliver Kamm**)

As for the Saudi group, results showed that self-mentions were used almost equally by both genders. This suggests that female writers do not seem to favour a personal kind of journalistic discourse as they adjust to the writing used by their male colleagues. This is probably related to the fact that those female writers are writing in a male-dominated culture where men define and legislate women's place in Saudi society. Generally, both male and female Saudi writers projected an impression of themselves and expressed attitudes towards their claims through means of self-mentions as the following extracts display:

- Some may argue that expatriates are not nationals and they are here in the Kingdom on temporary basis. Although I do not agree with that completely but in some cases it is true. What I know and the majority of people believe is that education is a noble message. It is a must for everyone who is able to educate himself and his children. Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, said: "It is obligatory for every Muslim, male or female, to acquire knowledge". I believe it is within our duties toward those living in the Kingdom to provide for them university education.

(*A University for Expatriates only* **By Mahmoud Ahmed**)

- It took me a few days to wake up to the fact that yes, this was a case of abuse, that no, it was not just a row, and that yes, any woman can be a victim of domestic abuse — facts that I already knew but somehow drew away from. Now I am hardly a conservative, nor someone who thinks men have the right to "discipline" their wives or their children. I am reasonably intelligent and aware of social issues, and yet I fell into the trap of turning a blind eye! I find that utterly worrying, and quite an eye-opener. There is also a lack of understanding of what constitutes abuse. All of us would classify a black eye or a broken rib as abuse, but we must learn that it goes beyond this; it covers all kinds of everyday behavior.

(*Domestic Violence is More than just a Black Eye* **by Imane Kurdi)**

Engagement Markers, these linguistic devices directed explicitly at the reader to gain and hold their attention. They "explicitly address readers, either to focus their attention or include them as discourse participants" (Hyland 2005a, p.53). Results of the quantitative analysis showed that female writers in both groups tended to use more engaging features than their male counterparts in their opinion texts. Statistical tests

identified a significant gender difference among British writers, with female writers using 1622 engaging devices (22 *per 1000 words*), higher than 1277 devices (15 *per 1000 words*) by male writers. This result ran against the findings of Tse and Hyland (2006), who found that males used far more engagement markers and boosters which express greater attitude, commitment, and reader involvement. This finding suggested that female writers were more concerned about reader involvement and leading readers to accept their views through the high use of the inclusive '*we',* and reader pronouns '*you'* and *'your'* as the following examples illustrate:

- While we Saudis are mindful that protecting Saudi society is a sacred duty, especially since Saudi society has treated women so well, the lesson here is that if you choose to apply for a job online or your name comes up as a potential candidate, your CV and your personal background are no longer just between you and your prospective employer.

(*Negative Side of Applying for Jobs Online* By **Sabria Jawhar)**

- The only way to explain is to suggest you try. Right now. Close your eyes and bring your attention into your body, to the sensation of your feet on the ground; the movements of your breath, the expansion of your rib cage. Stay with these tiny physical sensations. Patiently. Without getting cross with yourself for getting distracted. Try it for two minutes. Unfamiliar? It is, because our minds spin with thought, and we are absent to much of our physical experience.

(*Why We Will Come to See Mindfulness as Mandatory* By **Madeleine Bunting**)

Engagement markers and self-mentions were the most frequent interactional devices found in the female corpus. Female writers showed a balance of the writer's voice, through using self-mention devices, and the reader's voice, through using engagement devices, and succeeded in creating a strong authoritative and personal journalistic discourse that provides credibility and integrity. These features are indicative of a more personalized and engaging style often associated with female discourse (Holmes, 1988).

In sum, metadiscourse is an important means of facilitating comprehension, supporting a columnist's arguments, and building a relationship with a reader. It has been employed by male and female columnists similarly in the interactive dimension, suggesting both genders of columnists shared similar concerns about guiding the readers and offering reader-friendly texts. In contrast, male and female columnists displayed gender-based preferences in the interactional dimension of metadiscourse. Women columnists used more self-mentions, and more engagement markers and these features are strong indications of a more "tentative, personalized and engaging style often believed to be favoured by women rather men" (Tse and Hyland, 2006, p.185). In contrast, men columnists were more likely to use hedges in a way to tone down their judgmental authority and obtain a more objective impersonal style.

The following section discusses the impact of gender in the linguistic and the stylistic choices of columnists. Significant gender variation has been found among columnists regarding topic selection, writing style and linguistic choices. A detailed discussion of these gender-based differences in the opinion texts of columnists is presented in the next sections.

8.2. Gender Variation in Topic Choice

Gender differences in topic-choice have been widely reported in language and gender literature (Tannen, 1990; Bischoping, 1993; Fehr, 1996; Coates, 2004). According to this literature, men are more likely than women to address topics like politics, sports, finance, economics, crimes, history, technology and other masculine topics. In contrast, women are more likely to write about family, fashion, cookery, personal relationships, domesticity, and 'feminine' concerns. According to Larbalestier

(2006), it has been traditionally believed that men and women write differently; "that men write great literature about important and universal topics, while women's work is of limited literary value and confined to 'feminine' topics of little importance or interest" (p. 174). Research has shown that we tend to gender-stereotype across topics, assuming that women know more about 'feminine' topics and men know more about 'masculine' topics (Friedman, 1997). Results of the present study confirmed the existence of this gender stereotype and revealed that gender significantly influences the selection of topics of opinion columns in British and Saudi corpora, where male and female columnists do have different topics of interest. Findings showed that men's columns, in both groups, covered more political issues, more financial issues, and more topics related to entertainment, modern technology, environment, education and sport. Male writers addressed issues related to power, war, international affairs, football and other masculine topics as the following headlines from the corpus display:

- *Beware turning drug dealers into folk heroes*
- *Look upon the Arab Spring and despair*
- *Obama a peacemaker? Where's the surprise?*
- *World Cup? To them it's daylight robbery.*
- *Politics, not law, has become the master of British justice*
- *The digital revolution? It's all a gift to the power of the state*
- *Whole-life sentences are preferable to the hangman's noose*
- *Most Saudis are not racist, but racism still exists*
- *Great team with a great motto*
- *Drug trafficking: Nip the evil in the bud*

In contrast, women's columns covered fashion, travel, parenting, and social issues that are of a direct connection with femininity. Female writers in both groups are addressing issues that are central to their feminine lives as the following headlines illustrate:

- *Women Have Had Enough Discrimination*
- *Calls For a Ministry to Empower Women*
- *Let Women Drive For The Safety and Welfare Of Their Families*
- *When Women Can Watch But Not Take Part*
- *Women Seek Reforms To End Inheritance Injustices*
- *A Call For Men to Take A Stance To Stop Violence Against Women*
- *Why is Abortion Under Threat Again*
- *Rape is Violence, Pure and Simple*
- *I wish I'd Had The Birth of My Child Filmed*
- *Older Mothers aren't Freaks*
- *False Positive Pregnancy Tests*
- *All Women Gain From Feminism*
- *False Feminists Want to Make Abortion Harder*
- *How to Be A Good Mother*

There are two possible explanations for the finding: gender is a key variable that influences the choice of topic in the genre of newspaper opinion columns. First, it is possible to say that both men and women are writing their opinion columns from their own perspectives, and these perspectives are pervasively constructed through men's and women's knowledge of the world, experiences, attitudes, and expectations. This gendered knowledge is constructed through social practices and inequalities. According to Braden (1993), women columnists reflected shared experiences that may differ from those of men. "Women columnists are likely to have a vested interest in and a direct personal connection to subjects such as abortion or child care. They are wife, mother, and daughter. Their perspective is shaped by the family responsibilities; many have had to balance caring for children with work outside the home, and they know firsthand the feeling of being pulled in different directions. They may have encountered discrimination in the workplace, or felt challenged to prove themselves in a field dominated by men" (Braden, 1993, p. 16). Second, the impact of gender on the choice of a column topic can be a direct result of gender imbalance and inequality in journalism. Since the ancient history of journalism, women's role was to write with a woman's 'touch' about women for women readers (Wahl-Jorgensen and Hanitzsch,

2009). "Women were encouraged and pressured into writing with greater sentiment for women readers" (Allan, 2010, p.54). According to Chambers *et al*. (2004), women's journalism dealt with what were considered to be 'light' topics such as fashion, the arts, domestic issues, and society gossips, whereas male journalists dealt with the serious and higher-status news of political and economic issues. This finding is in line with previous research (Tannen,1990; Bischoping, 1993; Fehr, 1996; Soler, 2004; Newman *et al*., 2008) which reported a clear pattern of gender difference in topical preferences.

In spite of this finding, it is worth mentioning that women columnists today write broadly about politics, science, finance, government, international affairs in addition to family matters and personal concerns (Braden, 1993).

8.3. Gender Variation in Writing Style

The unique style of the columnist along with the talent of injecting personality into a column is the lure to attract readers. The style of the individual columnist differs from one columnist to another, of course, and the personalized ways to shape a column are also different. The study examined the style of British and Saudi opinion columns in terms of journalistic styles and in relation to gender. Findings unveiled significant gender differences between men and women columnists regarding their journalistic style. Men columnists in both groups tended to adopt a more factual informative style in most of their opinion columns. They appeared to be more focused on the facts and provide more verifiable information to support their arguments. In contrast, women columnists adopted a more personal and storytelling style that depended on personal experiences. They relied heavily on personal anecdotes and drew on their personal

experience to support their arguments. Braden (1993) illustrated this difference of style: a woman's column is usually constructed around a personal anecdote in which she employed detailed personal observations to establish support for her opinion on a larger issue. In contrast, all men tend to buttress their statements of opinion with fact and logic and the statements of other experts. The following extracts from the corpus display this gender variation in the writing style of opinion texts:

- And then there is debt. The Office for Budget Responsibility says that the ratio of household debt to income is set to start increasing again, and at a faster rate than it predicted in March. By 2015, household debt, including mortgages, is projected to exceed £2tn. And the critical point is how it is distributed. Last week, the Resolution Foundation's ever-insightful Gavin Kelly had a piece in the Financial Times warning that a sixth of private debt is held by households that have less than £200 a month to cover anything more than basic essentials. Nearly a third of mortgage debt, he pointed out, is owed by people who have borrowed more than four times their annual income. And a watershed moment will be reached when interest rates start to go up again. Which brings us to the next bit of seasonal good news. According to the OBR, unemployment will fall to 7.1% in 2014, and 7% the year after that. Seven per cent, let us not forget, is the rate of unemployment at which Mark Carney has said that the Bank of England will start to "reassess" its policy on interest rates. So far, he says, the figure represents a "threshold" rather than a trigger, but rates will sooner or later have to rise.

(*Under The iPads and PS4s The Ghoul of Debt is Lurking* By **John Harris**)

- There is a decent estimate that was provided by the respected "Sovereign Wealth Fund Institute", which basically has given its own assessment of the value of each country's financials invested power. It estimates that Saudi Arabia's SAMA (which is the country's central bank), has foreign holding assets totaling $679.5 billion, while Abu Dhabi Investment Authority's (ADIA) assets are estimated at around $627 billion. Kuwait Investment Authority, known as KIA, is estimated at around $386 billion, while the Qataris, through their powerful Qatar Investment Authority (QIA), are estimated to have $170 billion worth of assets. The sovereign wealth funds of the Gulf states have been doing very well with increased returns remaining very strong. They all average a year-on- year 13% (in 2013), that's a very respectable income from the 9% earned in 2012 or the 5% earned in 2011. While they all fall short in comparison with Norway, the world's largest sovereign wealth fund, which has assets totaling $818 billion and has a very important investment strategy, as well a strict corporate governance policy, but they are impro ving nevertheless.

(*For a Better Fund!* By **Hussein Shobokshi)**

- Even though I am a Saudi, I also have been touched by the inherent unfairness of the laws that govern expats' relationship with their employers. When my foreign husband came to Saudi Arabia, he worked under a Saudi sponsorship. The salary was good, but the work conditions were less than ideal. It never occurred to him to transfer to another job simply because of the red tape involved. He had also witnessed at least a half-dozen other employees who attempted to transfer their sponsorship either at the end of their contract or midway through the contract only to be refused. A ministry had aggressively recruited an expat friend of mine as a translator with a high salary, but his employer refused to release him. In effect, they worked as indentured servants. My husband — this was before we married — left Saudi Arabia and following our marriage returned to find a better paying job and benefits.

(*Let's Give Voice to the Voiceless* By **Sabria Jawhar**)

- Whenever someone offers to show me their childbirth slideshow/video I usually experience two things. First, the blind panic of a dog realising it's about to have a bath and there's no prospect of escape and, second, envy. Pure envy. Like a prat I forgot to take any type of camera to the maternity suite, a penny that dropped only when entering what we'll call the "swearing gargoyle" stage. My husband dashed across the road to a newsagent and bought a £4.99 disposable job, thus all we have to mark that momentous occasion are a few cheap snaps in which I resemble a waxy chamber of horrors exhibit and the baby is partially obscured by a frayed hospital towel. If you've got a beautiful film expertly shot in moody black and white then congratulations, but I'm afraid part of me sort of hates you.

(*I Wish I'd Had the Birth of My Child Filmed* By **Carol Midgley**)

Men's writing in the genre of opinion columns tends to be more information-oriented and abstract, whereas women's writing tends to be a highly personal and engaging. According to Braden (1993), columns written by many different women have been praised as 'intimate' and 'caring', two qualities that repeatedly surface in descriptions of columns by women (p.15). Despite this variation, findings showed that both male and female writers in both groups combined both formal and informal styles, but both genders show a high tendency to adopt more an informal style of writing in their opinion texts (Table.99).

Table 99. *Formal and Informal Style in British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

	Categories	British						Saudi					
		Male			Female			Male			Female		
		Total Items	F Per 1000 Words	P	Total Items	F Per 1000 Words	P	Total Items	F Per 1000 Words	P	Total Items	F Per 1000 Words	P
INFORMAL STYLE	**Personal Pronouns** *I* **and** *You*	887	10.92	8%	1527	20.75	18%	487	8.443	6.80%	673	10.97	10%
	Short Forms	125	1.539	1.10%	429	5.831	5%	8	0.138	0.11%	63	1.02	0.92%
	Colloquialism	150	1.847	1.33%	65	0.88	1%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
	Conversational Expressions *I mean, you know*	12	0.147	0.10%	218	2.963	0.24%	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
	Active Voice	10090	124.2	89.5%	6774	92.08	76%	6658	115.43	93%	6061	98.83	89 %
	Total	**11264**	**138.70**	**55.55%**	**9013**	**122.51**	**44.44%**	**7153**	**124.02**	**51.27%**	**6797**	**110.83**	**48.72%**
FORMAL STYLE	**Third Person** *The writer, The columnist*	2	0.024	0.08%	1	0.135	0.04%	1	0.01	0.04%	0	0	0%
	Long Forms	296	3.644	12.55%	450	6.117	21.7%	880	15.25	39.2%	1096	17.87	48%
	Technical Terms	28	0.344	1.18%	12	0.163	0.58%	18	0.31	0.80 %	5	0.08	0.21%
	Passive Voice	1815	22.34	77%	1403	19.071	67.87%	1245	21.58	55.58%	1137	18.54	50%
	Conditional *If*	217	2.672	9.20%	201	2.732	9.72%	96	1.66	4.28%	40	0.652	2%
	Total	**2358**	**29.036**	**53.28%**	**2067**	**28.097**	**46.71%**	**2240**	**38.83**	**49.57%**	**2278**	**37.146**	**50.42%**

This informality of style relied on the use of short forms, slang, active voice, personal references, and conversational tone. The relaxed informal style and the conversational tone is the characteristic of opinion columns (Gandon and Purdey, 2013). This finding of informal style of writing in columns confirms once more that it is the genre's conventions rather than the gender of the columnist that influence columnists' stylistic choices. The following lines from the columns display the informality of style by opinion columnists:

- In fact, I would call it the meh-all. When asking for advice, what you want is someone with experience and, let me tell you, I have experience of both the 80s and 90s, and I can tell you with certainty that the 90s had the far worse fashion, even the worst fashion of any decade, ever. And yes, I am including the 1970s in this statement. You see, the divide isn't between good and bad fashion – it's between fashion and no fashion, and whereas, the 80s definitely had fashion, the 90s had none. Seriously, think of the 90s. Remember them. Remember them well. I see fashion magazines now trying to pretend that we should all look back fondly on that decade and what is the fashion trend that they all cite as the one (and only, apparently) that we should all try to emulate again? Slip dresses.

(*The 90s Were the Worst Decade for Fashion. Do not Revive* By **Hadley Freeman**)

- But it's only a formula for running random stats and Google does that automatically, a billion times in an eye-blink. Replace the old boffin with a computer and you get the same result — "none at all" — with much less fuss. As we go through the paper, it's just story after story showing the ways in which humans are simply not fit to organise their own affairs. The answer is . . . well, don't ask me, I'm only human. Let's run the questions through Google. Yup, as I thought, the answer is "no". Humanity just can't be trusted to do anything for itself any more. The Google car is merely a metaphor for our total failure as a race.

(*Bring on the Googlebots to run everything* By **Giles Coren**)

8.4. Gender Variation in Linguistic Features

The textual investigation of this study also explored the impact of gender on the use of selected linguistic and rhetorical features in the opinion texts of British and Saudi writers. Results revealed significant gender differences in the frequencies of *adjectives, pronouns, verbs, articles*, and *gender nouns*. In addition, results exhibited some sort of similarity in the overall frequencies of all linguistic features between the two genders of writers in both groups. The following table displays the frequencies of use of these linguistic items in the corpus:

Table 100. *Overall Frequencies of Linguistic Features in British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

Linguistic Features	***British Columnists***						***Saudi Columnists***					
	M	***F***	***Percentage***		***Per 1000 Words***		***M***	***F***	***Percentage***		***Per 1000 Words***	
Pronouns	4364	5651	10%	13%	53.73	76.81	3358	3819	9.72%	10%	58.22	62.27
Gender Nouns	654	1995	1.5%	4%	8.05	27.11	817	1837	2.36%	5%	14.16	29.95
Adjectives	3375	4112	8%	9.5%	41.55	55.89	2812	3949	8.13%	11%	48.75	64.39
Verbs	10777	9305	25%	21.4%	132.70	126.48	7861	7239	22.7%	20%	136.29	118.04
Adverbs	2928	3346	6.7%	7.7%	36.005	45.48	2038	2192	6%	6%	35.33	35.74
Swear words	49	6	0%	0%	0	0	2	0	0%	0%	0	0
Articles	6901	5530	16%	12.7%	84.97	75.17	5305	5162	15.3%	14%	91.98	84.17
Numerical Terms	882	343	2%	0.79%	10.860	4.662	165	90	0.64%	0.25%	2.687	1.467
Conjunctions	3833	3961	9%	9.12%	47.199	53.84	3401	3594	10%	10.5%	58.968	58.605
Prepositions	9778	9157	22%	21%	120.405	124.47	8797	7846	25%	22%	152.527	127.941
Total	**43541**	**43406**	**50%**	49%	**536.156**	**590.07**	**34556**	**35728**	49%	**50%**	**599**	**582.60**

Adjectives, findings confirmed that women columnists in both groups are likely to use more adjectives and this gender-based difference is found to be statistically significant. This finding is in line with the findings of previous research which confirmed that women use adjectives more frequently than men do (Lakoff, 1975; Hiatt, 1977). Women's opinion columns in both groups exhibit evidence of high frequency of adjectives and descriptive terms as the following extracts show:

- Now I am a feral beast, out in the freelance boondocks. Visiting an office, I realise I've forgotten how to behave. (Am I talking too much?) I'm struck, Martian-like, by its absurdity: meetings that do little but beget more meetings, people wearing earphones to block each other out, ugly grey furniture, stained coffee mugs,Tupperware pots in the fridge with angry labels, all that pointless and exhausting social interaction. Offices are rat-labs of passive aggression, artificial light and group-think. I could never go back.

(*Home is Where the Hard Work is Really Done* By **Janice Turner**)

- For once, a moral panic that could be useful. "Heavy web use harms children," screamed a Daily Mail front page this week. Others followed suit with comparably alarming headlines. To be fair, the concern is not new, and to suggest that it's all the fault of the web is misleading. But it is absolutely right to highlight some very disturbing trends in child and adolescent mental health that are accelerating. Frankly, when things are as bad as they seem to be, you need every ally – and it's just possible that this government may begin to realise the importance of the issue if the Daily l screams at it. As a form of socialisation for children, it strikes me as disastrous. Only those with considerable alternative resources – strong, loving families, attentive and content parents, the good fortune of having loyal friends, good schools alert to their wellbeing as well as achievement – will manage to get through to adulthood relatively unscathed.

(*Our Children Really are Facing a Mental Health Crisis* By **Madeleine Bunting**).

- For a long time, there was one city that cropped up in every conversation: Barcelona. It seemed to have everything: good weather, original architecture, a thriving economy, great culture, world-class restaurants and a vibe of its very own, not to mention a football club that wins very often. It seemed to hit all the spots. Recently the talk has been split between two very different cities: Istanbul and Zurich. Istanbul is pegged as the place for the future, though perhaps the recent troubles might dampen that enthusiasm. Zurich appeals to the opposite camp. It is Switzerland at its best: everything works. It is clean and organized, and from schools to hospitals everything is world-class. It has great museums and art galleries, a solid economy, and an enviable quality of life. However, it may be just a little bit boring as the Swiss are not well known for their sense of humor. But if you want comfort and security, you cannot ask for more.

(*If You Could Live Anywhere in The world, Where Would it Be?* By **Imane Kurdi**)

The extensive use of adjectives in women's opinion texts emphasizes the fact that female writers are more likely to apply adjectives and emotional terms to soften their arguments and add friendly elements to their column in order to establish a direct relationship with the readers. It is possible to label women's language in opinion texts as emotional and expressive.

Pronouns, findings also provided further significant gender differences between female and male columnists regarding the use of pronouns. There is evidence that female columnists in both groups tended to use more personal pronouns in their opinion texts than their men counterparts. The use of *I, Me, We*, and *You* is highly evident in women's corpus reflecting a high degree of subjectivity and involvedness. Interestingly, British and Saudi women writers also made much higher use of the feminine 3rd person singular pronouns (*She, Her*). The use of the feminine 3rd person singular pronoun (*She)* was relatively rare in the men's corpus and this indicates that men's opinion columns are predominately male directed. Higher frequencies of (*You*) in women's texts show females' emphasis on sharing experiencing and offering advice. Similarly, higher frequencies of first person pronoun (*I*) are a strong indicator of sharing personal experience. According to Heath (2006), an important distinguishing feature of text written by female, when compared with male, authors is their frequent use of pronouns. "Female authors tend to involve their reader more in their discourse, whereas male authors use the text primarily for presenting facts. The pronouns *I, she, you* are used more often by women than men, whereas men tend to use determiners a, the, and that more frequently" (Heath, 2006, p. 46). This finding that female columnists used significantly more pronouns than male columnists in opinion texts corresponds to previous research (Pennebaker and King, 1999; Koppel *et al*., 2002; Argamon *et al*., 2003; Groom & Pennebaker, 2005; Friginal, 2009; Schwartz *et al*.,

2013) which reported that women use more personal pronouns than men. The following examples from the female corpus display the use of personal pronouns:

- Domestic violence is a subject I know little about but that appalls me and angers me almost more than any other. I know the cold facts; I know the stereotypes, the images from films and television, but rather happily I do not know of any woman in my circle of friends or in my family who is a victim of domestic abuse, but more on that later. Now I am hardly a conservative, nor someone who thinks men have the right to "discipline" their wives or their children. I am reasonably intelligent and aware of social issues, and yet I fell into the trap of turning a blind eye! I find that utterly worrying, and quite an eye-opener.

(*Domestic violence is more than just a black eye* By **Imane Kurdi)**

- It's not just about you. You have to let loose the Monster Munch, put a lock on your bedroom door and buckle up for the biggest balancing act of your life. The moment you give birth you may have the great existential realisation that it's no longer all about you any more. Your purpose has been served. Then they come to patch up your nether regions, aptly described by of all people Robbie Williams after the birth of his first child as like seeing his "favourite pub burnt down". You ask the guy with the needle and thread his experience of embroidery because *yes* this *is* all about you. Welcome to motherhood, this constant seesawing between you and the child that is impossible to balance.

(*How to Be a Good Mother* By **Suzanne Moore**)

Gender Nouns, findings also unveiled another significant gender-based variation in the frequency of gender nouns. Women writers in both groups tended to use more gender nouns than men in their opinion texts. Nouns such as 'child', 'mother', 'women', and 'men' show a very high occurrence in females' opinion texts. For example, the feminine noun '*women*' was used 1209 times in women's corpus; whereas it was used 176 times in men's texts. Such a high frequency of the noun *'Women'* is strong evidence, which indicates that a lot of the articles are directed towards women's issues and concerns. This finding is in line with Hiatt's study (1977), in which she confirmed that female writers used feminine words more frequently than males.

Verbs, results revealed a gender-based difference between men and women columnists regarding their use of verbs. Men columnists consistently displayed in their opinion texts higher frequencies of auxiliary verbs, progressive verbs and past tense verbs than women columnists. High frequencies of verbs in male-authored texts may be correlated to the informational style of these texts. Writers are using more verbal clauses to present information and support their arguments. This finding ran against previous studies which found that women used verbs more frequently than men (Koppel *et al*., 2002; Newman *et al*., 2008).

Adverbs, normalized findings showed that there was difference between British male and female writers regarding the use of adverbs. Higher frequencies of *adverbs of manners*, *adverbs of place*, *adverbs of time*, *adverbs of frequency* and *adverbs of purpose* were found in female-authored texts. Such higher frequencies of adjectives and adverbs in women's columns suggest that women writers are more likely to make their column more interesting, their meanings more precise, and their style more descriptive. This finding is consistent with previous studies that showed that women were more likely than men to use adverbs (Hiatt, 1977; Mulac 1998; Aries, 1996). Results also showed that there was no gender variation among Saudi columnists in their use of adverbs.

Articles, Swear words, Prepositions and Numerical terms, the present study provided evidence of gender-based differences in the frequencies of these variables. Findings showed that men writers were heavy users of articles, prepositions, swearing, and numerical terms and they have used these terms more frequently than women and these findings are consistent with previous studies. The tendency of men to use more articles was confirmed in previous research (Mehl and Pennebaker, 2003;

Groom and Pennebaker, 2005; Newman *et al*., 2008) which found that in different written texts men are more likely to use articles and prepositions. Similarly, the common belief that men swear more and use more taboo language was confirmed in previous research (Lakoff, 1975; Kramer, 1974; Gomm, 1981; Coates, 2004; Mehl & Pennebaker, 2003; Schwartz *et al*., 2013). The use of numerical terms as a marker of men's language was also reported in previous research (Koppel *et al*., 2002; Newman *et al*., 2008). This finding indicates that men's opinion texts are information-oriented and columnists are relying on facts and numbers in supporting their arguments. According to Biber (1995), texts written by male informants seem to be more informational, i.e., they present more determiners and cardinal numbers while the texts written by female informants contain more involvedness features, presenting a high frequency of singular person pronouns. According to Newman *et al*., (2008), women wrote more about thoughts, emotions, other people, and relationships. Men were more likely to write about occupations, money, and sports; and refer to numbers, and use more articles, prepositions, and swear words.

In sum, findings of the present study confirmed to some extent that gender influences the journalistic discourse of columnists and has an effect on their linguistic choices. There was a clear pattern of gender-based variations between male and female opinion columnists. Men's columns relied on factual information, numerical data and drawing more on research and empirical studies. Men columnists used more verbs, numerical terms, swear words, articles, and prepositions, and wrote longer texts about politics, economy, education, sports, and modern technology. Men columnists are taking more an objective stance relying on verifiable materials, focusing more on the topic discussed and writing from impersonal perspective. Women's columns, in

contrast, were more subjective, more emotional, personal, descriptive and drawing on personal experience. Tannen (1990) suggested that a woman's way of making sense of the world is a more private endeavour than that of men, involving observing and integrating personal experience and drawing connections to the experiences of others. Linguistically, women columnists used more adjectives, adverbs, personal pronouns and gender nouns, and make more reference to themselves by using more self-mentions. Women columnists seek to communicate their voice and speak directly to their audience. Higher frequencies of 'I' and 'you' in women's columns seem to signal an ownership and show a feminine pride over the ideas discussed, in addition to creating a personal relation with the reader. Women's columns reflect what is going on in their lives and touch feminine shared experiences that are different from men.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter discussed the findings of gender-based investigation in the genre of opinion columns among British and Saudi columnists regarding the use of metadiscourse markers. Generally, men and women writers of newspaper opinion columns in British and Saudi press displayed similar frequencies in their overall usage of metadiscourse especially the interactive one. Such similarity of use confirms that male and female columnists are following the genre's conventions. The power of genre seems to constrain writing practices and influence opinion texts more than the gender of the columnist. In this way, this study supported the idea that men's and women's ways of writing in journalistic discourse have more similarities than differences in terms of metadiscourse. In spite of that, gender-based variations in some of the sub-categories of interactional metadiscourse had been reported and discussed.

This chapter also discussed gender variations among columnists in relation to certain linguistic features. Some significant gender differences between male and female columnists especially in the use of adjectives, personal pronouns, and gender nouns were reported. In addition, a clear pattern of gender-based variation was found between men and women columnists regarding their choices in topics and writing style.

The next chapter will be devoted to the discussion and the interpretation of the results of the quantitative analysis of metadiscourse use across the two groups of writers: British and Saudi. It will discuss in detail cross-cultural variation of metadiscourse in the opinion texts of British and Saudi writers and provide possible interpretations for differences. In addition, it will discuss other variations among columnists in relation to linguistic features, topic-choice, and writing style.

IX. Chapter Nine

Discussion

Part II

9.0. Introduction

Metadiscourse concerns self-reflective linguistic expressions referring to the evolving text, to the writer, and to the imagined readers of that text (Hyland, 2004, p.133). Mauranen (2010) suggested that metadiscourse is a "discourse universal" in that it is "such a major element of communication that languages generally possess means for expressing it" (p.21). Despite its universality, there are variations of use of metadiscourse across languages and users. A major question of the present study was about the possible difference between British and Saudi columnists in metadiscourse use. This chapter responds to this question and reviews the key findings of the investigation of cross-linguistic variation of metadiscourse in newspaper opinion columns in Saudi and British writing. Findings of this comparative analysis revealed significant cross-linguistic differences for the overall frequency of metadiscourse as well as for some sub-categories. A detailed discussion of the sub-categories of metadiscourse with several examples from both corpora is provided. This chapter also explores possible factors that account for differences or similarities found in British and Saudi opinion writings, and links the present results to previous studies in the literature on metadiscourse. In addition, it discusses other possible variations in terms of topic choice, writing style, and co-occurring linguistic features in British and Saudi opinion columns.

9.1. Discussion

The findings of the investigation of metadiscourse resources in 320 newspaper opinion columns from four leading British and Saudi newspapers totalling **273,773** words, confirmed that there were **33,854** metadiscourse tokens in the corpus, an average of **105.49** occurrences per opinion column or **3** elements of metadiscourse in

every **25** words in each of the two corpora: British and Saudi. The results presented in the previous chapter also showed that both groups of writers used high frequencies of metadiscourse elements in their opinion articles. It is evident that British and Saudi writers made use of both interactive and interactional metadiscourse, with British writers employing a total of **19,229** (124.240 *per 1000 words*) metadiscourse devices, and Saudi writers employing a total of **14,625** (122.899 *per 1000 words*) metadiscourse devices. Results also revealed that British writers employed more interactional than interactive metadiscourse, whereas Saudi writers used more interactive than interactional forms. The following table summarizes the use of all the categories of metadiscourse in both corpora: British and Saudi:

Table101. Frequencies of Metadiscourse Resources in British and Saudi Opinion Columns

Categories		***British***			***Saudi***		
		Total Items	***F Per 1000 Words***	***Percentage***	***Total Items***	***F Per 1000 Words***	***Percentage***
INTERACTIVE	Transitions	6711	43.360	81%	6101	51.268	80%
	Frame Markers	946	6.112	11%	512	4.302	7%
	Endophoric Markers	26	0.167	0.3%	30	0.252	0.3%
	Evidentials	265	1.712	3 %	138	1.159	2%
	Code Glosses	387	2.500	5%	847	7.117	11%
	Total	**8335**	**53.853**	**52.21%**	**7628**	**64.100**	**47.78%**
INTERACTIONAL	Hedges	2870	18.543	26%	1896	15.932	27%
	Boosters	1635	10.563	15%	907	7.621	13%
	Attitude Markers	265	1.712	2%	288	2.420	4%
	Engagement Markers	3225	20.836	30%	2157	18.126	31%
	Self-mentions	2899	18.730	27%	1749	14.697	25%
	Total	**10894**	**69.740**	**60.89%**	**6997**	**58.789**	**39.10%**
Total		**19229**	**124.240**	**57%**	**14625**	**122.899**	**43%**

As mentioned in chapter three, the interactive dimension allows the writer to manage the information flow and reflects his/her awareness of the readership. The writer's purpose is to shape and constrain the text to meet the needs of a particular

reader and at the same time guide him/her through the text. Therefore, the use of resources in this category addresses ways of organizing discourse (Hyland, 2005a). The interactional dimension, on the other hand, concerns the ways writers conduct interaction by introducing and commenting on their message. The writer's aim is to make his/her views explicit and to involve readers by allowing them to respond to the unfolding text. The use of resources in this category is essentially evaluative, and engaging, expressing solidarity, anticipating objections and responding to an imagined dialogue with others (Hyland, 2005a, p.49). As shown in the above table, Saudi writers tended to use more interactive devices in their texts than interactional devices and this tendency of using more interactive forms confirmed the awareness of writers of the importance of guiding the reading process by employing textual devices that organize the text, relate statements, and offer a friendly coherent whole to the reader. In contrast, British writers used more interactional than interactive forms in their opinion articles and this predominance of interactional devices emphasizes their concern to establish a mutual understanding with their readers by creating appeals of rationality, creditability, and emotion. This finding corresponds to Hyland's (2004), study of metadiscourse in academic dissertations. Hyland found that the doctoral theses used proportionally more interactional metadiscourse than master's dissertations. This can be attributed to the recognition by doctoral students of the social interaction nature of academic texts.

To conclude, it is possible to say that British writers care more about engaging their readers and allowing them to comment and evaluate the texts, whereas Saudi writers care more about textual devices and organizational aspects that assist coherence comprehension, guide the readers and make them aware of the writer's preferred perspectives. This result is quite expected since the target audience of Saudi texts is

the general public for whom English is not their mother tongue, and consequently Saudi columnists understand that the propositional information in their texts should be organized in ways that the target audience is likely to find coherent and convincing.

The following sections will discuss the results concerning the sub-categories of the two dimensions of metadiscourse: interactive and interactional and show how they are being used differently by the two groups of writers. Generally, of these sub-categories, *Transitions* were overwhelmingly the most common device in newspaper opinion coulmns, and *Endophoric Markers* were the least frequently used forms of metadiscourse in the corpus.

Transitions, or text connectives express semantic relations between the main clauses of a text and they mainly include conjunctions and adverbial phrases. They "comprise the rich set of internal devices used to mark additive, contrastive, and consequential steps in the discourse" (Hyland and Tse, 2004, p. 168). Transitions guide the readers through the text and help to build cohesion by showing textual relations such as addition (*furthermore, besides*), comparison (*likewise, similarly*), contrast (*on the contrary, on the other hand*), and consequence (*as a result, consequently*). Results revealed that transitions stand out as the most frequently used sub-category of metadiscourse in both corpora, as they comprise 80% of all the interactive resources. Both writers made considerable use of transitions, with 6711 (43 *per 1000 words*) transition markers in the British corpus, and 6101 (51 *per 1000 words*) in the Saudi corpus. This high use of transitions in the corpus reflects writers' deep concerns about their readers and how the use of these forms serves to guide the reading process, link ideas logically, assist coherence, and facilitate the organization of the text as can be seen from the following examples:

-That also goes for revolutions – and is what appears to be happening in Egypt. Many activists regard traditional political parties and movements as redundant in the Internet age. But that's an argument for new forms of political and social organization. Without it, the elites will keep control – however spectacular the protests.

(*Egypt, Brazil, Turkey: Without Politics, Protest is at the Mercy of the Elites* by **Seumas Milne**, a British Columnist)

-In addition, these abusive husbands tend to marry again to other women and repeat the same scale of violence. They are, however, clever to hide the history on why the previous marriage failed. As a result, another woman falls prey to this man and suffers at the hands of this abusive husband, who continues his cycle of abuse.

(*Blacklist for Abusive Husbands* by **Mahmoud Ahmad**, a Saudi Columnist)

This study found that transitions were the most frequent devices of metadiscourse in newspaper opinion columns and this result is consistent with previous research (Hyland, 1998a; 1998b; 2004, Hyland & Tse, 2004, Lee & Casal, 2014). Findings of these studies reported that transitions were the most frequent sub-category of metadiscourse in university textbooks, research papers, and postgraduate dissertations.

Regarding the sub-categories of transitions, it has been found that Saudi writers rely more on additive markers, whereas British writers favour more transition markers signaling limitation and contradiction. In other words, most transition markers in the Saudi corpus belong to the additive type such as *and, further, in addition,* and *also*, whereas most transition markers in British corpus belong to both additive and adversative type such as *but, however*, and *in contrast*. This difference may have something to do with the ways in which different communities view and construct their argumentation. That is, Saudi writers more frequently built their argumentation by adding evidence to the original claim using a progressive approach, whereas British writers often developed their argumentation using a retrogressive approach by the use of adversative markers. This finding is in accordance with findings reported in previous contrastive research by Mauranen, 1993; Dafouz-Milne, 2003; Noorian &

Biria, 2010. Mauranen (1993, p.236), for example, argued that while Finnish writers build their argumentation using a progressive strategy that entails moving forward in the presentation of ideas and adding evidence to the original claim. In contrast, Anglo-American writers exhibit a retrogressive strategy, which requires reconstructing the argumentation and presenting different sides of the argumentation to reach a plausible result. The two examples below extracted from the data exhibit how the British writer builds his argument about history using a contrastive approach through employing the adversative marker *but*. By contrast, the Saudi writer constructs his rationale about the benefits of reading through listing a set of facts using additive markers:

- History was once the preserve of the specialist, but increasingly it has also become something to be relived, enjoyed and played with, a buffet of past experiences and knowledge that people can imaginatively graze, being an Anglo-Saxon jeweller one moment, a Spitfire pilot the next. I loved *Game of Thrones* from the first blood-spattered, morally ambiguous moment. This is a drama that manages to be historical without being weighed down by history; it creates a fantasy world that is realistic, recognisably human, fickle, and fantastically violent: *The Sopranos* set in Middle-earth. But in contrast to Tolkien's thumping battles between good and evil, these are humans fighting and scheming against fellow humans, seizing their bawdy pleasures, suffering and dying in a world with unpredictable and frequently unhappy endings.

(*Dwarfs, Dragons and Surprisingly True History* by **Ben Macintyre,** a British Columnist)

- Other positive consequences of books are that they are constantly inspirational and motivational, and they create better thinkers. They also help us form our own thoughts and values. Additionally, further benefits can be seen in that reading develops the mind, keeping it fit and more flexible in terms of accepting the thoughts of others and thus makes for more informed decisions. The myriad of benefits include improved concentration and focus, as well as the development of creativity and analytical thinking. Furthermore, reading provides an outlet through which one can build on good ideas and expose the bad ones before they result in destruction.

(*Books are Still My Best Friends in the Digital Age* by **Dr. Khalid Al-Seghayer**, a Saudi Columnist)

In addition, a possible explanation for the high frequency of additive markers in Saudi texts can be linked to mother tongue influence and Saudi writers' tendency to produce longer sentences. Arabic written discourse is characterized by structural parallelism, and the prevalence of coordination. For example, the conjunction *and /wa/* connects words, phrases, and sentences; helps develop the flow of the text; it is odd in

Arabic to begin a sentence without it. This finding is in line with Dafouz-Milne (2003), who explored the role of metadiscourse in editorials between Spanish and British writers, and found that the Spanish writers overwhelmingly preferred additive markers to link ideas. It also supports Hinkel's (2002) study, who found that Arab students used more transitions in their writing. This result also supports Kaplan's (1966), observation that the influence of linguistic and cultural background of non-native writers in English persists even when they attain an excellent command of a target language. Kaplan claimed that EFL writers transfer rhetorical patterns from their first language to their EFL writing. The following two examples from the Saudi corpus show the high use of additive markers in the texts:

Religious and cultural diversity is an asset of human society and an important driving force for social development, cultural exchange and world peace. It is important to spread awareness and respect for human rights and maintenance of peace and security among our youth.

(*Creating an Effective Civil Society* by **Samar Fatany**)

Thus, when we indulge in dialogue with others, we should value their opinions, strive to be considerate and sensitive to their preferences and feelings, learn something from them, and never stereotype people. Additionally, we should develop an interest in and appreciation for other people's cultures and backgrounds and avoid prejudices and racist attitudes. We should learn to appreciate people's differences rather than fear them.

(*Dialogue without ills* by **Dr. Khalid Al-Seghayer)**

Frame Markers, these linguistic devices of schematic text structure such as *first, finally, in sum, then,* and *subsequently* are used to sequence, to mark text stages, to announce discourse goals and to show topic shifts (Hyland, 2005a). Findings revealed that the total frequency of frame markers in British texts was slightly higher than that of Saudi texts. The total frequency of use of frame markers in British corpus was 946 tokens (6 *per 1000 words*), whereas the frequency of frame markers in Saudi corpus was 512 tokens (4 *per 1000 words*). The difference of use of frame markers between the two groups was found to be statistically significant. Regarding the sub-categories

of frame markers, it has also been found that British writers used more devices to sequence, label stages, announce goals, and shift topic in their articles than did Saudi writers. This finding is in line with Marandi (2002), who found that Anglo-American applied linguists used significantly more frame markers than their Iranian counterparts. In spite of this result, both groups of writers displayed relatively low frequencies of use of frame markers, and this might be attributed to the genre conventions of columns in general. Frame markers are not essentially needed in these short-length columns, as columnists often prefer to introduce their topics directly without the use of these makers. This is because the main topic is often clearly stated in the title of the column or because the number of topics covered in a column is usually limited. The following examples from the corpus show how writers announced their goals through the use of frame markers:

- But let's start with the baby issue. I honestly can't remember the last time I read an article about moisturiser, let alone a press release about moisturiser, without being promised that this product will make my skin "baby soft". Now, as regular readers will know, this column disapproves of many things. So many things. I do not wish to cause any shock here but, speaking as one who has been ageing happily since the day I was born, ageing is not a bad thing.

(*The Point of Moisturiser is to Make you Feel Good* by **Hadley Freeman**)

- I have written several articles in this newspaper about the war crimes tribunal in Bangladesh. In those articles, I have pinpointed the shortcomings and defects of the trials being conducted by the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) in Bangladesh. I am not the only person who has written about this. There are many writers, journalists and intellectuals who have also dealt with this issue. I do not want to engage in a quarrel with Mr. Das or become involved in all the lies in his lengthy article, which is not only monotonous, but also lacks any logic and objectivity. However, I would like to address a number of these cheap lies.

(*Cheap and Misleading Lies* by **Dr. Ali Al-Ghamdi)**

Endophoric Markers, these devices refer readers to information in other parts of the text. Findings showed that the least salient interactive resource in the whole corpus was endophoric markers. In the British corpus, there were only 26 endophoric markers

(0.167 *per 1000 words*), and similarly a few occurrences found in the Saudi corpus 30 (0.252 *per 1000 words*). This finding is quite expected due to the journalistic nature of opinion columns, in which writers prefer to communicate with readers directly. It is true that endophoric markers provide readers with additional salient materials by referring them to other parts of the text. But the journalistic and short nature of this genre necessitates columnists to present information in an explicit and targeted manner in order to be more direct and effective. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that endophoric interactive resources are a minimal feature of the journalistic discourse of opinion columns. According to Hyland (2005a), endophorics are largely a feature of science and engineering texts, and they are overwhelmingly a feature of writing in the hard disciplines, where the referent is usually a nearby table or graph. They are used to signal the to- and-fro between visual and verbal information, acting to make content clearer and inducting learners into the ways that science typically employs a variety of semiotic systems to make meanings (Hyland, 2005a, p.157). The following extracts from both corpora show the use of endophoric markers:

- As I said earlier, Asian models have become more prominent with the rise of the Asian market for luxury goods. Same with Russian models. The fashion industry simply doesn't envisage its goods being bought by black customers

(*Why Black Models are Rarely in Fashion* by **Hadley Freeman)**

- The question that bugs me is: What am I going to do when I retire? In the absence of most the above options, I may end up a cashier or a receptionist. It could be worse —a coach potato. I can't stop wondering why can't we have better options for retirees?

(*Retirement: The day after!* by **Dr. Khaled M. Batarfi)**

- The motto of the Al- Nasr club is: Mutsadr La Tuklmni. So, what does that mean? I will tell you later. I was in Washington, D.C. at the time when the two football titans were clashing.

(*Great Team with a Great Motto* by **Abdulateef Al-Mulhim)**

Evidential Markers, these linguistic devices refer readers to sources of information from other texts. Results revealed that British and Saudi writers employed this category of interactive metadiscourse similarly and both used them at a close frequency level (1 *per 1000 words*). Findings also revealed that both groups favoured using citations as they were the most frequently used evidential markers in both corpora. "Citations are crucial to gaining approval of new claims by providing persuasive support for arguments and demonstrating the novelty of assertions" (Hyland, 2005a, p.106). Since our corpus can be categorized as journalistic writing, it appears that citation, through the use of evidentials, is crucial to the social context of persuasion in opinion columns, insofar as it provides support and justification to the writer's proposition. The following extracts from the corpus demonstrate how the use of these interactive resources help to support the writer's opinion and contribute to an understanding of what counts as evidence in the texts:

- Voter trust in the EU falls to record low. So proclaimed the front page of today's Guardian. In every one of the big European states, trust has gone into "a vertiginous decline". Five years ago, no country, not even Britain, showed more than half its voters hostile to Europe, and most were strongly supportive. Now, according to the EU's own Eurobarometer, distrust runs at 53% in Italy, 56% in France, 59% in Germany, 69% in the UK and 72% in Spain. The EU has lost the support of two thirds of its citizens. Does it matter?

(*The European Dream is in Dire Need of a Reality Check* by **Simon Jenkins**)

- Plain packaging makes cigarettes less attractive to young people. Evidence supports that and the Government ought not to have postponed deciding whether to legislate. But historical perspective is encouraging. Within a generation, the cause of "smokers' rights" has all but disappeared. Bernard Levin wrote less than 30 years ago: "To choose whether we smoke is part of a great right — the greatest really — the right to govern our lives ... But the experience of being in a smoky atmosphere is a nuisance."

(*Let's not rest until we've stubbed out smoking* by **Oliver Kamm**)

- A German study has confirmed what I have long suspected: Using social networking sites such as Facebook can provoke envy and frustration and lead to increased dissatisfaction with life. These are the conclusions of a joint study by two German universities, the TU Darmstadt and the Humboldt-Universitat Zu Berlin, where researchers surveyed 584 Facebook users in Germany on how they felt after using Facebook. What they found is that one-third of respondents reported strong negative feelings after using the FB platform, and the main cause of this whirlwind of negative emotion was envy.

(*How Facebook Fuels Envy* **by Imane Kurdi**)

- The 19th Century British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli purportedly said, "There are three kinds of lies: lied, damned lies, and statistics." When I recently introduced a group of students to this quote, they were most engaged and amused by the difference between the first two designations — lies and "damned lies." What would a damned lie have to be like, to distinguish it from a regular lie? No one, seemingly, questioned or was surprised at finding statistics lumped in with the lies, damned or not.

(*Statistics Create Stories Where None May Exist* by **Alaa Al-Ghamdi**)

Code Glosses, these devices of interactive metadiscourse help readers to grasp the writer's intended meaning. Based on the writer's assessment of the reader's knowledge, these devices reword, explain, define or clarify the sense of a usage, sometimes putting the reformulation in parentheses or marking it as an example (Hyland, 2005a). Findings showed that both groups of writers made considerable use of these elaboration devices, as Saudi writers employed them **847** times (7 *per 1000 words*), whereas British writers employed them **387** times in their articles (2 *per 1000 words*). Code glosses were significantly used more frequently in Saudi texts, functioning either to provide clarification (e.g., *which means*, *namely*) or to provide examples (e.g., *for example*, *such as*). A Chi-Square test showed that this difference of use of code glosses between the writers was statistically significant. This finding suggests that Saudi writers are quite aware of the general public they are addressing, especially in a society where English is used as a foreign language, and therefore they understand that applying code glosses to their opinion columns contributes to the clarification of ideas and the communication of the intended message of the writer. This result coincides with that of Dafouz-Milne (2003, 2008) who found that Spanish writers were using these explanatory devices much more frequently in their opinion columns and editorials than their English counterparts.

Results also revealed that code glosses providing reformulation and elaboration were found to be predominantly used over code glosses providing exemplification in

both corpora. Reformulation and elaboration help to clarify the journalistic discourse, contribute to the creation of coherence, solve communicative problems, and provide reader-friendly prose while conveying the writer's intended meaning. According to Cuenca & Bach (2007), reformulation ensures textual cohesion and at the same time facilitates discursive progression because it helps in reducing the possible communicative defects of a text, and it also makes it possible to re-elaborate the conceptual content of some statements previously presented in order to accomplish different functions. The following extracts from the corpus display the use of code glosses:

- We guess the worst that can happen is Google bothering us with an annoying ad or Spotify recommending Taylor Swift. But if that knowledge goes elsewhere, if governments can get it when they ask for it, or even without asking for it, then that means something else entirely. It means that the intelligence agencies can now watch the entire population, albeit by privatised means, having in effect outsourced the job of spying to the web mega-companies.

(*Obama is like Apple, Google and Facebook* by **Jonathan Freedland)**

- As you'll have read on our front page yesterday, our Government is keen to bring in a levy to curb our own plastic bag use. Amid debate about precisely what sort of businesses it should apply to, the South African experience ought to give us a moment's pause. Some other plastic bag taxes, it is true, have been more successful. Ireland's, for example, is thought to have reduced individual usage from 328 per person in 2002 to a startlingly low 20-ish per person today. At €0.22 per bag, though, their tax is a fairly major disincentive, particularly for a big weekly shop. Ours will be around a quarter of that.

(*Our Plastic Bag Addiction is Choking the Planet* by **Hugo Rifkind**)

- One of the greatest challenges Saudi Arabia and the Saudi people are facing is the need to overcome the tendency to be reactive and not being proactive. We tend to take action after problems have already arisen, not the other way around. We do not put forth polices and plans for an uncertain future. In other words, we often attend to the crisis of the moment and perhaps wait for an irreversible situation to develop and then scramble to find a solution and actions to take in response.

(*Saudi Arabia and its People are Reactive not Proactive* by **Dr. Khalid Al-Seghayer**)

- The answer is that there is a line between being responsible for a tragedy and acting responsibly to encourage responsible behavior in others. Producing the clothes we wear is a complex supply chain. If we want every link in that chain to act responsibly — and by that I mean that every worker involved should gain a fair wage and work in decent conditions — we need to act responsibly at the end of the chain. As consumers, we can certainly ask more questions about how the clothes we wear are produced.

(*Buying responsibly* **by Imane Kurdi)**

Regarding the second category of metadiscourse; interactional metadiscourse, results of the cross-linguistic examination showed that interactional metadiscourse is evident in both corpora. Closer examination of the subcategory of interactional metadiscourse indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between writers in terms of frequencies of these devices as presented in the following sections:

Hedges, are validity markers which show the writer's degree of commitment to the truth-value of a proposition such as *perhaps, may, could*, *might, possible, likely, etc*… . Hedges are used to help the writers avoid direct responsibilty with his/her statement, which in turn helps the writer maintain personal credibilty while simulatanously showing adherence to professional honesty and openness (Hyland, 1998b, p. 238). According to Hyland (2005a), hedges emphasize the subjectivity of a position by allowing information to be presented as an opinion rather than a fact and therefore open that position to negotiation. Hedges therefore imply that a statement is based on the writer's plausible reasoning rather than certain knowledge, indicating the degree of confidence it is prudent to attribute to it.

Hedges have a high frequency in the corpus as they occupy the third position in terms of frequency after *self-mentions* and *engagement markers* in the texts under study. Results of the comparative analysis display that both groups of writers employed a similar frequency of hedges in their opinion columns. British writers obtained a frequency of **2870** occurrences (18 *per 1000 words*), while the Saudi writers had a frequency of **1896** occurrences (15 *per 1000 words*). The most preferred forms of hedges were *about,* and the modals *could, would,* and *should*. Hedges were widely employed by both writers in the corpus and the use of these devices help them to secure their primary objectives in the texts, obtain acceptance for their claims, and

avoid responsibility for the certainty of a proposition as the following examples from the corpus show:

- Perhaps being rich is relative rather than absolute; it's not how much money you have but how that places you with respect to others. It is interesting that a monthly income of more than €5,000 is enough to put you in the top 10 percent in France, as 90 percent of salaries are less than that sum. Or perhaps it is a question of terminology. Being "rich" is a word full of connotations, perhaps wealthy is better, or "high net worth individual" to use the jargon of the world of finance. In fact I was much amused by the terminology of the latest Cap Gemini/RBC World Wealth Report. They referred to people with $1-5 million in liquid financial assets as "millionaire next door", $5-30 million made you a "mid-tier millionaire" and $30 million or more an "ultra high net worth individual". There are, they estimate, more than 10 million "millionaires next door" in the world but only 111,000 "ultras".

(*How Rich is Rich?* by **Imani Kurdi***)*

- Investment in education, it seems, is all too often seen as a frill or an extra by those in charge of it. It is true, I suppose, that other needs can seem more pressing — such as health care or support for industry that will determine our long-term fiscal wellbeing as a society. Certainly, there are more glamorous concerns for the government to deal with. However, we ignore funding for public education at our own great peril. In many ways, it may seem that education in Saudi Arabia is hardly in a state of crisis. We have very high literacy rates for both men and women, and the average years spent in school (again, for both genders) rivals the best in the world. There is no doubt at all that higher education is in demand and that postsecondary institutions have been popping up to meet that demand.

(*Investment in Education is Vital for Social Uplift* **by Alaa AlGhamdi)**

- Now we are liberal with our innermost secrets, spraying them into the public ether with a generosity our forebears could not have imagined. Where we once sent love letters in a sealed envelope, or stuck photographs of our children in a family album, now such private material is despatched to servers and clouds operated by people we don't know and will never meet. Perhaps we assume that our name, address and search preferences will be viewed by some unseen pair of corporate eyes, probably not human, and don't mind that much. We guess the worst that can happen is Google bothering us with an annoying ad or Spotify recommending Taylor Swift.

(*Obama is like Apple, Google and Facebook* by **Jonathan Freedland)**

- Maybe it wasn't a pose. You see, alongside running a site that allegedly processed sales worth more than $1!billion, his Pirateness also ran a book club. Oh yes. And this was not, as you might have assumed, devoted to the works of Irvine Welsh, Howard Marks and Bez from the Happy Mondays. Oh no. This focused on Austrian School economics, and the market anarchist philosophy of agorism. Sure, the money came from the drugs. But this was supposed to be more than that. This was supposed to be ground zero, the bold and radical forging of a whole new world. It creeps along largely under the radar, probably because it is quite hard to get your head around, and most of the people who can do that make Ed Miliband look like Tom Cruise.

(*Beware Turning Drug Dealers into Folk Heroes* **by Hugo Rifkind)**

The predominance of hedges and the similarity of their frequencies in the corpus confirm the critical importance of distinguishing fact from opinion in journalistic writing in order to persuade newspaper readers. Dafouz-Milne (2008), argued that by means of hedges "writers can anticipate possible opposition to their claims (by expressing statements with precision but also with caution and modesty), while simultaneously, enabling the reader to follow the writer's stance without the writer appearing too assertive" (p. 107). This common use of hedging in the genre of opinion columns corresponds to previous research where hedges hold a predominant position. Hedges were the most frequent category of metadiscourse in opinion columns (Dafouz-Milne, 2008), a key element in academic writing (Hyland, 1998b; Moreno, 1998), and in economic texts (Moreno, 1998; Mur Dueñas, 2007). The modal verbs *should, could* and *would* were among the highest frequency items in the corpus, presenting claims with both caution and respect to the views of readers. This finding is also in line with studies where modal verbs are the most typical realization of hedging (Hyland, 1998b; Dafouz-Milne, 2008).

Boosters, these interactional metadiscourse devices, such as *certainly, clearly, prove, evident*, allow the writer to close down alternatives, head off conflicting views, and express his/her certainty in what he/she says (Hyland, 2005a). According to Hyland (1999), the use of boosters suggests that the writer recognizes potentially diverse positions but has chosen to narrow this diversity rather than enlarge it, confronting alternatives with a single, confident voice. By closing down possible alternatives, boosters emphasize certainty and construct rapport by marking involvement with the topic and solidarity with an audience, taking a joint position against other voices (Hyland, 1999). Their use strengthens an argument by emphasizing the mutual experiences needed to draw the same conclusions as the writer (Hyland, 2005a).

Results obtained clearly confirmed that the use of boosters was common in both corpora but was less frequent than hedges. Results also showed that the British writers used significantly more boosters (**1635** tokens, 10 *per 1000 words*) than did the Saudi writers (**907** tokens, 7 *per 1000 words*). This finding of using more hedges and fewer boosters in the corpus indicates that both writers tended to express their arguments and claims more cautiously and open a broad space for alternative views by readers. Hedges allow them to reduce their responsibility for the truthfulness of a statement and show that they are open to alternative perspectives; consequently writers can protect their reputation as columnists and gain positive reaction and respect towards the topics of their columns. Therefore, it is possible to say that column writing, through the use of hedging, relies more on a dialogic engagement with readers and more explicit recognition of alternative voices.

It is claimed that good writers are more able to balance their use of *hedges* and *boosters* in their writing (Williams, 2007). Findings provided evidence that both British and Saudi writers were successful in providing a balance between hedges and boosters and thus maintain their credibility in their opinion columns. Hedges and boosters "carry the writer's degree of confidence in the truth of a proposition, displaying an appropriate balance between scientific caution and assurance, but they also present an attitude to the audience" (Hyland, 2005a, p. 98). According to Aull (2015), hedges and boosters contribute to the writer's ethos or credibility. Hedges open discursive space for alternative views by showing less certainty or commitment, and therefore can contribute to a writers' ethos of caution, humility, and diplomacy (Hyland, 2005b; Salager-Myer *et al*., 2012; Vande Kopple, 2002). In contrast, boosters close discursive space for alternative views by showing a high level of certainty leaving less room for alternative views of readers. The following examples from the

corpus display how writers use a balance of hedges and boosters to construct their proposed claims:

- A slight difference in initial conditions had dramatic effects. It reinforces just how unlikely it is that the conditions for life (notably the presence of surface liquid water) should exist. In a recent book, *The Reason Why: The Miracle of Life on Earth*, John Gribbin makes a forceful case that we are almost certainly the only technologically advanced civilisation in the galaxy and may be alone in the Universe. Whether this is ennobling or dispiriting is a matter of debate. Whether it's true may never be known.

(*The Man Who Found a Name for Nazi Horrors* **by Oliver Kamm)**

- Of course none of that's true. I didn't ever realise it was even happening until I went online. But that's women for you. Scatty. We get a special day and we don't even know about it. Possibly because, in this country, we don't know what it's really for. If Women's Day meant a public holiday, I would be more excited. Instead, it feels like a cosy exercise for a coterie of women, with too much new-age babbling – not for cynical witches like me. I don't doubt, of course, that in some parts of the world it signifies something much deeper. But personally I would like a day off from feminism, which gets exhausting.

(*International Women's Day?* by **Suzanne Moore**)

- Investment in education, it seems, is all too often seen as a frill or an extra by those in charge of it. It is true, I suppose, that other needs can seem more pressing — such as health care or support for industry that will determine our long-term fiscal wellbeing as a society. Certainly, there are more glamorous concerns for the government to deal with. However, we ignore funding for public education at our own great peril. In many ways, it may seem that education in Saudi Arabia is hardly in a state of crisis.

(*Investment in Education is Vital for Social Uplift* By **Alaa AlGhamdi**)

- Often, other nationalities accuse Saudi society of being racist and also not respecting or valuing other cultures. I do tend to agree with the latter part of the observation, as we do not have a reputation of a society that is tolerant and accepting other cultures. While incidents of racism are certainly prevalent in our society, as in every society, it would be unfair to label our entire society as racist. That's the argument I would like to present. What people should understand, and I think they know this already, is that racism is a global phenomenon and is not only limited to our countries.

(*Most Saudis are not Racist, but Racism Still Exists* by **Mahmoud Ahmed**)

Attitude Markers, this category of interactional metadiscourse allows writers to reveal their attitudes toward the subject matter or the propositional content in their opinion articles. Results reveled that this category displayed the lowest scores within interactional resources. Results also showed that attitude markers were used with a

similar low frequency by both groups of writers: British writers (265 tokens, 1 *per 1000 words*) and the Saudi writers (288 tokens, 2 *per 1000 words*). This limited use of attitude markers indicates that both columnists were very cautious and thoughtful when they express their attitudes toward a particular content in their texts. This attitude can be positive, negative, or indecisive about a certain topic of the column. More specifically, writers by means of attitude markers can agree, disagree, advice, oblige, question, warn, predict, and doubt any propositional content. These attitudes may have a direct influence on the readers and lead to some sort of active debate especially because opinion columns are addressed to the general public with different levels of education and knowledge. In other words, writers in the corpus tended to be more objective and convey their effective attitudes through a limited number of attitude markers in order to avoid possible debate among readers. This finding contradicts Dafouz-Milne (2008), who found that English and Spanish writers used a high frequency of attitudinal markers in their opinion columns and that the writer's personal feelings (agreement or disagreement) prove to be a persuasive tool in the eyes of the reader. The following examples from the corpus display the use of attitude markers:

- I agree wholeheartedly with the British politicians who have decided to boycott this year's Golf Open Championship because it is being held in a club that refuses to admit women as members. The prestigious event started on Thursday and is due to conclude on Sunday. It is disappointing to realize that clubs that maintain that sort of attitude still exist in a trailblazer country for gender equality like Britain.

(*When Women Can Watch but not Take Part* by **Imani Kurdi**)

- I have accepted that my electronic life may be analysed: I just think we should know when we are being tracked. Although I admire Edward Snowden, the whistleblower, for telling the public what we all suspected, I don't agree it means the end of democracy. I care more about what we can access than what they can discover. My worries aren't about privacy but porn. It's not about what strangers might be learning about me on the net, but what the net is allowing people, and particularly children, to view.

(*It's What our Children Spy on that Worries Me* by **Alice Thomson)**

Self-Mentions, these devices of interactional metadiscourse referred to explicit reference to the writer of the text, and they are measured by the frequency of first-person pronouns and possessive adjectives. According to Ivanic (1998), all writing carries information about the writer, but the convention of personal projection through first-person pronouns is perhaps the most powerful means of self-representation. The presence or absence of explicit author reference is generally a conscious choice by writers to adopt a particular stance and a contextually situated authorial identity (Hyland, 2001b). Both British and Saudi writers enhanced their authorial involvement through a high frequency of use of self-mentions. Findings disclosed that self-mentions were by far the most frequent interactional metadiscourse markers in the corpus, with **3225** occurrences in the British articles (20 *per 1000 words*), and **2157** occurrences (18 *per 1000 words*) in the Saudi corpus.

This extensive use of self-mentions with **3403** first-person pronouns in the corpus indicates the authors' goal to build a personal ethos in their opinion columns. These personal expressions help to strengthen the writer's presence in the text and directly engage the readers with the views expressed. There is much evidence from both groups of writers for inviting readers into the text by means of using the pronoun "we" in order to establish solidarity with them. It is possible to say that self-mentions is a key features of the journalistic discourse of opinion columns which enable columnists to promote a journalistic identity and gain approval for their personal claims. The following extracts from the corpus display how writers project their voices on their texts through the use of self-mentions:

- I am of the pro-American generation. To us America was the future. Europe was nowhere. We read, saw, heard, visited America. We studied and worked there. Some of us even married Americans. We were affiliates of the tribe. We bought into the exceptionalist legend.

(*After This Budget Chaos is Uncle Sam* by **Simon Jenkins**)

- Now I think I might have judged them all too harshly. The passion was probably sincere, perhaps all the more so because they were involved in high-tension politics, for reasons I'll come to. After all, I see what's happened to me. I now read this paper's football writers almost as closely as I read its political correspondents. I check the New York Times and Haaretz websites as regularly as ever, but now sneak a peak at the excellent Gunnerblog and Arseblog. Arsenal's fixtures are in my diary; I have found myself organising travel plans around home games. I own a red and white scarf. I have become a fan. I know I've come to this party late. But as I prepare for tomorrow's game, I'm glad I'm here.

(*Late in Life, I Have Become a Convert to the Beautiful Game* by **Jonathan Freedland**)

- While I was no stranger to the library environment during my studies at Saudi universities, it wasn't until I started my postgraduate program at the University of Newcastle in England that I was fully immersed in the confines of a library. At the Robinson Library on Newcastle University's campus, I spent as much as 12 hours a day studying, reading for pleasure, drinking countless cups of coffee and tea, gossiping and generally making myself comfortable among books I would never read and the books I could never put down. Being surrounded by books alone was enough to inspire me.

(*Library Culture: Turning the Page* by **Sabria Jawhar**)

- To fight unemployment and poverty, we need better education. Our curriculum design should be aligned with job market needs. If there are many more graduates of Arabic and religious studies than there are jobs available in these fields, then we should focus on more needed areas, like computer science, accounting and marketing. It is also about time that we train our youth in manufacturing and services. There is nothing wrong with manual labor. How can we succeed in localizing millions of jobs if our people are not trained for them or prepared to accept them?

(*Quality Education: How Can We Get There?* by **Dr. Khalid Batarfi**)

British and Saudi writers project a very powerful authorial identity in their texts by means of personal pronouns, and self-citations. In doing so, they represent themselves as competent and original columnists of the genre of opinion columns and they succeeded in providing the readers with their individual thoughts and beliefs in a very personal way. In addition, these linguistic items of authorial stance play a vital role in the construction of the writer/reader relationship. This finding of the high frequency of self-mentions in opinion columns corresponds to previous studies on self-mentions which revealed that these explicit references to the writers are rhetorical strategies that were also used by academics to present themselves as authorities in their fields, as they

promote themselves and outline their novel contributions in their disciplines (Hyland, 2001; Harwood, 2005).

Engagement Markers, these markers of interactional resources of metadiscourse aim at establishing a relationship with the reader. Results showed that engagement markers were also far more common in opinion columns, particularly imperatives and obligation modals which direct the reader to some thought or action. Both groups of columnists made high use of engagement markers in order to make readers participate in the discourse and convince them of the validity of what is being claimed. Statistical results showed a significant difference in the use of these markers between the two groups as they were more frequent in the British corpus (British *n* = 2899, 18 *per 1000 words*; Saudi *n* = 1749, 14 *per 1000 words)*. Results also revealed that the inclusive pronoun '*we'* and the address form '*you'* were the most frequently used engagement markers in both corpora. According to Hyland (2005a), "*Reader pronouns* are the most explicit way that readers are brought into a discourse and *You* and *Your* are the clearest way a writer can acknowledge the reader's presence" (p.151). The use of these pronouns with other engagement markers help to establish an open and explicit dialogue with the reader as the following examples illustrate:

- So, kids, denounce your history and Eliza Doolittle-style remake yourself! If you didn't grow up in a family that went skiing, or didn't spend £100 a pop on crappy theatre productions or never played retro board games, just pretend you did. No one will notice! Life as a class imposter is tricky. Change your accent, tone down your clothes and lie; exude self-belief even as you are no longer who you were.

(*Working-class Kids Shouldn't Have to be More Middle Class to 'fit in'* by **Suzanne Moore**)

- But most importantly, remember this: women are told that they must do many things in order to look glamorous or properly feminine, whatever the hell that is, and it's all nonsense. By all means, wear high heels or play with eyeliner, but do it for yourself, not because you think you should, and remember, you're absolutely fabulous without such fripperies, too. So if it gets to a point where you're breaking your ankles, or I'm poking my eyes out, let's agree, Savannah, to forget about it.

(*Women Should only Wear High Heels if They Really Want to* by **Hadley Freeman**)

- Laughter affects us biologically and psychologically by releasing chemicals that make us feel good. Laughter helps prevent disease, and humor helps people cope with stressful situations and relieve anxiety. Let us turn to examine some interesting facts related to laughter and gender. Medical studies have shown that gender affects the way a person's brain responds to humor, and that some gender differences appear as early as age six. Such facts confirm the idea that women and men differ in the way they perceive, use, and appreciate humor, and in the way they view the meaning and function of laughter. I would like to conclude by directing the reader's attention to an observation often made by some Western writers indicating that the culture of laughter is absent in Saudi Arabia.

(*Prompting Laughter in Society* by **Dr. Khalid Al-Seghayer)**

- Should anyone have the final say on whom you choose to be your partner for life? Many GCC nationals are facing this question every day. I strongly believe that marriage is a personal choice. I don't know much about the person of your choice, and cannot advise you there. But I do feel that if you really know that you are right, then you must fight. May Allah choose the best for you, sister, and give you strength and guidance. That was my opinion dear readers, what are yours?

(*Managed Marriages and an Ocean of Broken Hearts* by **Dr. Khalid Batarfi)**

By means of these reader-oriented markers, columnists promote the active role played by the readers, and succeed in addressing their interests, beliefs, and expectations. The common use of engagement markers found in the corpus coincides with previous research (Hyland, 2004; Hyland, 2000; Hyland, 2002b; Dafouz-Milne, 2008) which reported that engagement features were more common in doctoral texts, undergraduate textbooks, academic articles, and opinion columns particularly imperatives and obligation models.

In sum, metadiscourse in the journalistic discourse of opinion columns contributes to represent writers' propositional information in ways that are meaningful and accessible to the readers. British writers were heavy users of interactional metadiscourse employing them more frequently in their texts than Saudi writers. This reflects British writers' deep concern about the readers and how they are more determined to encourage readers to engage with the topic, establish a credible identity, allow more space for alternative voices, and produce a more personal piece of writing. English

writers were more cautious (using more hedges), more certain (using more boosters), and more personal and visible (using more self-mentions) compared to Saudi writers. In contrast, Saudi writers employed far more interactive metadiscourse markers, with much higher use of transitions and code-glosses. They care more about guiding the reader through the reading process by using discourse organizational devices and linking prepositional connections and meanings. Saudi writers tended to represent their readers with a coherent persuasive discourse (through the use of transitions), and attempted to organize their discourse in ways that assist readers' comprehension capacities (through the use of more code glosses).

9.2. British and Saudi Topic Choice

It is evident that the British and Saudi writers had covered a diverse range of topics in their opinion columns. These topics range from the local to the worldwide including politics, lifestyle, economics, social issues, entertainment, science and technology, education, travel, business, any topic of interest for general readership. According to Stephenson (1998), columns continue to embrace a wide range of subject matter, which is one of their most endearing qualities, and the most popular areas for columnists are latest topical issues, domestic environment, cultural issues, and personal life and relationships. Findings showed that both groups of writers, although from different cultural backgrounds, share similarity of ideas and express their views about the same issues. For example, both groups of writers wrote about current world events and common issues such as *Syria's crisis, the world cup*, *smoking, education, family holidays, Internet and technology*, and *gender equality.* This similarity of thought can be related to the revolutionary invention of the Internet and the creation of global village where all people share similar information easily. Consequently, columnists

often read the news and watch and listen to current events in the media and come up with ideas for their opinion texts. This result is in line with Friginal and Hardy (2014), who reported that American and Filipino opinion columns have very similar subjects from political and business commentaries, lifestyle, entertainment, travel, sports and leisure, and science and technology.

Results also revealed that a large number of opinion columns analyzed in this study were a direct reflection of the society in which they are published and these columns discussed its purely local concerns, issues, and challenges that are of direct interest to the readers of that society. Columnists conveyed their messages about a local affair or a social issue in a way that engages and instructs the reader. They also offer resources for additional information and facilitate understanding of the issue. In this way, the columns invite the readers to participate and do something regarding that issue. A possible explanation for the frequency of local affairs in opinion columns can be related to the fact that readers are more attracted to columns that discuss their local life and current concerns. In other words, columns about society and local events are read more frequently than columns on other topics such as economy and environment. Studies and surveys have shown that readers' interests consistently prevail when it comes to reading newspaper articles about one's local society (Louis Harris, 1974-1978; Gallup 1980-1995; Aspen Institute, 2000, as cited in Ray, 2002, p.176). The following table displays some examples from both corpora of opinion columns which predominately reflect the local life of British and Saudi societies:

Table 102. *Social Extracts from British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

	Headlines	***Extracts***
British	- Half a Million Britons using Food Banks. What Kind of Country is this Becoming? - Why Does Childcare Cost so much in Britain? - At Last a Way to Fix the Most Troubled Families. - Housing Crisis? No, just a Very British Sickness.	- Life holds many mysteries but for the working parent in Britain one of the most unfathomable is surely this: why the hell does childcare cost so much? Here's the puzzler. Our Government spends more than £7 billion a year on pre-school support, among the highest in the world and more than Germany, France and the Netherlands. Our nursery workers meanwhile are paid among the lowest wages in Europe. - Most people would like a nicer house. That is not a "need" but rather a demand, and thus drives house prices in a free economy. But in Britain demand is not just for a nicer house: it is for an investment, a hedge against inflation and old age, a golden gate to otherwise impossible wealth. It is this that drives middle-income families into a frenzy, and has pushed up house prices in the south-east by some 9% in the past year.
Saudi	- Concrete Steps Must to Check Gender Crimes -Saudi Youths Live Out their Lives Online - Saudi Unemployment: A Ticking Time Bomb - Using Arabic to Teach English in Saudi Public Schools	- There are various reasons why young Saudis remain unemployed or are unemployable. While there are many job openings in the country, many young Saudi job seekers lack the required qualifications and skills specified by employers. This is the result, as academicians believe, of the current Saudi education system. The emphasis of studies in Saudi institutions of higher education is on theoretical aspects (75 percent). Graduates of such theory-oriented majors do not satisfy the requirements of the market, which mostly requires technical and vocational specialists. - That is a value that I think most of us would agree upon; so how is it, then, that women and girls are harassed and victimized to an alarming degree, despite the protection seemingly offered them by the veil and by our traditional institutions? The reports are clear and very disturbing. There are those who will prey upon girls and women, the younger and more seemingly defenseless, the better, in their minds. I wonder why the number of such incidents has increased? It may be that the silence over these issues is being broken and previously taboo subjects are now talked about and reported more. Or it may be that social changes are putting women increasingly at risk. It hardly matters. The important thing is that we know it is happening, and that we respond accordingly, on multiple fronts.

9.3. British and Saudi Style of Writing

Style is basic to any opinion column giving its distinctiveness and journalistic identity that help in gravitating readers. According to Stephenson (1998), a column is "one piece of journalism that can be often described as a victory of style over content".

Style is what makes these texts unique. Readers are interested in reading opinion columns because they like the topics the columnists pick, the opinion they hold, and the way they say things. Simply, readers like their style. The individual style of writing an opinion column, of course, differs from one columnist to another as each columnist has his/her own personality and particular way of writing. However, the personal style of each columnist is not a concern of this study as it examined and compared generally the style of both groups of columnists in relation to some textual features such as *short forms, subjectivity,* and *colloquialism.*

Results revealed that both groups of columnists have shown a simple and clear style of writing where the tone is often persuasive and both mix formal and informal language in their texts. Speaking journalistically, most of the columnists adhered to what is known as the inverted pyramid and it was the prevailing style in both sets of columnists. This style helped columnists to convey the most important information tersely and quickly. From the introduction of the column to the conclusion, the columnist presents facts in a descending order of significance. This finding of predominance of this factual style is expected since the inverted pyramid style is probably "the style most favored and most often recommended by professionals in the field, and the style that is taught in all journalism courses" (Holtz, 1990, p.249). This finding of the predominance of informational style echoes the findings of Friginal and Hardy (2014), who reported that American and Filipino opinion columns had a highly informative or informational style.

Results also showed that the hourglass style was the second most frequent style with both corpora showing a very similar number. In this style, columnists combined facts with large chunks of narratives. They build their columns depending on facts while putting more emphasis on the human experience. The hourglass style is a

powerful way of capturing the attention of the readers since the story element has a profound effect on the readers. The narrative style was the least used in the corpus with both groups of columnists showing an identical number of uses. In this story-telling style, real-life observations or true-life stories are written in a chronological order. The following extracts from the corpus display the use of different styles:

A. British Texts

Inverted Pyramid ➡

- With persistent digging they found that in the year to June 2012, 85 per cent of all indictable crimes in England and Wales were committed by men. Moreover, the more serious the offence the more male offenders: 88 per cent of crimes against the person, 98 per cent of sexual offences and 90 per cent of murders were by men. And although theft is seen as the domain of female shoplifters, women were responsible for only 21 per cent. Taking into account that 19 out of 20 prisoners (each costing around £40,000 a year) are male, Cockburn and Oakley calculated that if men committed the same amount of crime as women, we'd save £30 billion a year.

(*Why Do Men Commit almost All the Crime?* by Janice Turner)

Hourglass ➡

When we talk of rocketing house prices, and it sometimes feels as though we do little else, this is the bit that never gets a mention. Arguably, though, it's the most important bit. The 2011 Census told us that 36 per cent of households live in rentals, about half of them from private landlords. In London more than half of homes are rented. According to the *Evening Standard*, London's local newspaper, the average London rental is now £1,141, far more than the average London monthly mortgage repayment (£717). Yes, house prices in the capital are rising faster than rents (10 per cent last year, as opposed to 4.4 per cent) but house prices are theoretical things for existing homeowners; numbers on a page. Rents aren't like that. When the rent goes up, your bank balance goes down.

I'd know. Three years ago, with one kid already and another in what I probably shouldn't refer to as "the pipeline", my wife and I were trying and failing to sell our flat. After a few depressing months we took what felt like the foolish and perhaps downright irresponsible decision to remortgage to the absolute limit that our bank would allow and use the lump sum as a deposit on our new place. Renting the first out would cover the second mortgage, we reckoned, and we'd put it back on the market in a year.

(*If Buying a Home is Bad, Renting is Far Worse* by Hugo Rifkind)

Narrative ➡

-There is nothing I like about gyms: the people; the clothes; the muscle Marys; the MTV; the mirrors; the monotony. Whereas, the idea of building movement into one's routine every day seems sensible. I have one of those pedometer things that I have never opened. I even have those horrible shoes that are somehow based on barefoot Masais, because let's face it, my life is very like that of a Masai warrior. I had hoped that liking walking, rather like enjoying gardening, would just happen to me. But no, and my superfit friends who have always run have now done their knees in. My doctor also said I had to do weight-bearing exercise for bones. So by the time I met Zana Morris, who runs The Library, I felt pretty hopeless. Hopeless in the way only sausage rolls could help. She weighed and measured me and pinched my fat with claw-like callipers.

(*'I've joined the gym!'* by Suzanne Moore)

B. Saudi Texts

Inverted Pyramid ➡

- Saudi citizens, first and foremost, applauded enthusiastically the initiative to combat financial and administrative fraud, widespread mismanagement, and other malpractices in the government. The perceived level of corruption throughout the country increased over the past decade, and as such holds back Saudi Arabia's development. For example, Saudi Arabia's property rights score is now lower than the world average. Saudi corruption index was 2 points in 1997, reached 4.5 in 2003, and decreased in 2006 to 3.3 points, placing the Kingdom at the 50th rank in corruption on the global level. Recently, Transparency International in its annual corruption perceptions index for 2010 gave Saudi Arabia a score of 4.7 (on a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 is "highly corrupt" and 10 is "highly clean") and Saudi Arabia was given a 66th place in 2012 (out of 176 countries), scoring 44 out 100. It was estimated that more than 3,000 national projects are suffering from mismanagement, which leads to a direct result of a systematic failure to apply Saudi anti-corruption laws.

(*No Place for Corruption in Saudi Arabia* by Dr. Khalid Al-Seghayer)

Hourglass ➡

- It took me a few days to wake up to the fact that yes, this was a case of abuse, that no, it was not just a row, and that yes, any woman can be a victim of domestic abuse — facts that I already knew but somehow drew away from. Now I am hardly a conservative, nor someone who thinks men have the right to "discipline" their wives or their children. I am reasonably intelligent and aware of social issues, and yet I fell into the trap of turning a blind eye! I find that utterly worrying, and quite an eye-opener. Just this last week the World Health Organization published a report where it estimated that one in three women worldwide is domestically abused. It also reported that 38 percent of women murdered are killed by their partners. Last month the National Family Safety Program estimated that three out of 10 women in Saudi Arabia are subjected to domestic violence. We've also seen some admirable new campaigns to raise awareness on the subject like "Can't be covered" and "Hit her if you dare". And this brings me to the women that I know.

***(Domestic Violence is More than just a Black Eye* by Imane Kurdi)**

Narrative ➡

- It reminded me of the only time I attended a football match in the United Kingdom. The school of my children had given them free tickets to attend a match at the Sheffield Wednesday Football Club. Due to their excitement, I couldn't say no to them and decided to take them to the match. What really attracted my attention was the high-level security at all the roads leading to the stadium. Police officials on cars, vans and horses were roaming the streets, around the stadium and even law-enforces were in the stadium to prevent any riot or untoward incident.

(*Avoid Posting Unfair Comments* by Hatoon Kadi)

The similarities in the journalistic style can be attributed to the newspaper-genre conventions of opinion columns that seem to have similar journalistic standardizations

across cultures. Regarding differences, findings showed that British writers tended to show a degree of informality in their texts more than Saudi writers. British writers tended to speak directly to their reader, using more colloquial forms, applying an informal tone and thus achieving more familiarity with them. Results showed that British texts contained more aspects of informal language that provided readers a sense of intimacy and create an element of entertainment. British writers used in their texts more first-person pronouns, more short forms, more colloquialisms, and more conversational expressions than Saudi writers.

Saudi writers, by contrast, tended to have a higher degree of formality in their opinion texts than British writers. They follow the journalistic conventions of writing opinion articles, use lower expressions of subjectivity, avoid colloquialisms, and express their thoughts in a more formal tone using complete grammatical sentences. This finding of the high formality in Saudi texts can be linked to a number of reasons. First, the influence of the mother tongue, Arabic, played a big role because almost all Arabic speakers write in the formal standard language. Classic Standard Arabic is always used in written materials and it is the written language of books, media, newspapers, and official speeches and documents (Versteegh, 2001). Second, almost all the columnists in this study are highly educated and they work as academics, journalist professionals, teachers, authors, and doctors belonging to the elite of Saudi society and they are highly influenced by the textbook language. Finally, it could be related to some restrictions of Saudi cultural and Islamic laws to any unconventional use of media language. This result responds to the claim that non-natives of English often use a more formal register than natives of English (Leitner, 1991, p. 224). Murray (1995), found that in electronic emails Italians use a more formal register than Americans and other English speakers, who used an informal catchy style. Similarly,

Friginal and Hardy (2014) reported that Filipino opinion columns were more formal and scholarly unlike American opinion columns. The following table displays two extracts from the corpus of these styles:

Table103. *Formal and Informal Style in British and Saudi Opinion Columns*

	Style	***Extracts***
British	Informal	- Put me in charge of Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs. I could sort this stuff out in an afternoon. "What?" I'd say when they came into my office. "You license your coffee from Amsterdam? And that means what, exactly? Licence? Coffee? It's not a bloody dog. Give me £40 million or I'm taking you to court. Next you'll be telling me that you have a multibillion-pound leasing deal with Liechtenstein for those tiny little pencils that you use to write my name on my cup, as though I were a toddler or a moron. Oh, and it's not 'Ludo', by the way. Seriously. Who the hell is called Ludo? Yeah, now I'm angry. Make it £45 million. Let me give you a loyalty card. Now get the f*** out." **(*Give Me a Day. I'll Sort Out This Tax Avoidance* by Hugo Rifkind)**
Saudi	Formal	- It is also the duty of the government and society to provide training facilities, rehabilitation programs and incentives to encourage employees to do their work properly and efficiently. Employers should provide new employees with orientation programs and properly introduce them to the work they will be doing. New employees should not be reprimanded for the small mistakes they may make while learning how to do their jobs. They should be corrected and shown the best way of carrying out their duties. As for the employees, they should not neglect their duties or show any slackness in performing their assignment. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) says that Allah will hold the individual accountable for properly doing the job which he is paid to do. He also says that Allah asks all of us to perfect the work we are doing. Laws and legislation ensuring the rights of both employees and the employers should be drafted. The employer should create a healthy work atmosphere, provide sufficient training and provide adequate financial incentives. At the same time, he should not shy away from punishing employees who are lazy or who are not willing to do their jobs properly. **(*Saudization: Rights and Responsibilities* by Dr. Ali Al-Ghamdi)**

9.4. Linguistic and Rhetorical Features

The textual investigation of this study also examined the use of linguistic and rhetorical features in the opinion texts of British and Saudi writers. Results revealed a high degree of similarity in the frequencies of the linguistic features between the two

groups of writers. Both groups of writers shared matching frequencies of many linguistic features found in the corpus such as adjectives, verbs, pronouns, adverbs, and articles. This finding is in line with Friginal and Hardy (2014) who found that Filipino and American opinion columnists follow similar guidelines and conventions for the most part. According to them, 'the distribution of linguistic features across these opinion columns is relatively the same' (Friginal & Hardy, 2014, p. 159).

The similarity of occurrences of these linguistic features provides strong evidence that the texts of British and Saudi writers belong to one distinctive journalistic register, opinion columns. Some linguistic characteristics are typical of the register of opinion columns such as first-person pronouns (*I, we, me, our*), second-person pronouns (*you-your*), imperative verbs (*e.g. read, ask, apply, look, share*), and active voice (*I thought, I agree, we won*). These features are pervasive in newspaper opinion columns, and their distribution throughout these texts can distinguish them from other type of texts. This finding also provides evidence that Saudi columnists as nonnative writers showed an excellent command of English language in their texts. Saudi columnists displayed a high level of proficiency in using English grammatical structures and rules, a clear formal style, a mastery of basic writing skills, and a broad acquaintance with topics of columns.

Regarding rhetorical features, the examination of columns showed that there were many rhetorical devices employed in the opinion texts of British and Saudi texts such as simile, metaphors, allusion, anaphora, and intertextuality. Both columnists produced high quality columns with frequent use of these rhetorical devices that aided detailed descriptions and offered rich layers of meaning. However, the investigation of these rhetorical devices was not a concern of this study since it dealt basically with metadiscourse and gender in opinion texts. It is also worth pointing out that use of

rhetorical devices, proverbs, and idiomatic expressions was limited and mostly used in the column headlines. Column headlines were short, concise, and direct whereas several rhetorical techniques were skillfully employed in order to attract the attention and hold the interest of the readers as the following examples shows:

- *Cinderella's Law Will Sweep Up Traumatic Cases*
- *High Heels always Leave Me with a Low Feeling*
- *Skyrocketing rents, Sinking Morale*
- *Drug trafficking: Nip the Evil in the Bud*
- *Is Prevention Better than Cure*
- *The Human Touch Beats the Click of a Mouse*

In sum, both groups of columnists proved to be successful in relaying current events and public affairs, and producing persuasive texts that have the essential elements of journalistic discourse. The language of these opinion columns was basically simple, clear, expressive, and communicative with little use of figurative language. The high degree of similarity among columnists in terms of linguistic and rhetorical features confirmed that both columnists are respectful of the journalistic conventions and stylistic traditions of opinion columns. This is in line with the characteristics of journalistic writing. According to Elgibali (1996), journalistic language is a special form of writing that is essentially neutral, simple, yet expressive and communicative. Journalistic language shares with scientific language its concern for factuality and shares with literary language its concern for style.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter discussed the key findings of the quantitative analysis of the concept of metadiscourse in the opinion texts of British and Saudi writers, and provided answers to the research question about the cross-cultural difference between British and Saudi

columnists regarding their use of metadiscourse and other linguistic textual features. To the columnist, metadiscourse is a useful concept in the journalistic discourse of opinion columns because, through its devices, it helps to expose the presence of a writer, organize the text, facilitate communication, aid comprehension, and allow the writer to build a relationship with readers. The majority of the chapter was devoted to the discussion of use of metadiscourse subcategories in British and Saudi opinion texts. In most of the cases, results were consistent with previous research of metadiscourse. Statistically significant differences were found between the two groups with British columnists using more frame markers, boosters, and engagement markers, and Saudi columnists using more transitions, attitude markers, and code glosses. Stylistic variation was also found with Saudi columnists obtaining a more formal style and standard language in their columns, and British columns associated with a more informal personal style. Regarding similarities, the study reported a broad agreement between writers in the use of linguistic devices, rhetorical devices, journalistic style, and topic choice. These similarities can be attributed to the newspaper-genre of opinion column as columnists follow similar guidelines and conventions and reflect wider social perspectives in their texts.

The next final section will address the research findings and place them within the context of the primary research questions, and draw general conclusions on gender differences and the concept of metadiscourse in the journalistic discourse of opinion columns. Recommendations for further studies in relation to gender and language, metadiscourse, and media discourse will be also provided.

Conclusions

In the following sections, the main conclusions and results of the present study will be summed up. These findings will hopefully contribute to the existing knowledge of three fields, namely, (a) language and gender, (b) the concept of metadiscourse, and (c), studies of written media discourse.

Conclusion 1: Gender is a Significant Influential Factor

One of the major aims of the present study was to explore the influence of gender on the linguistic choices of columnists by examining metadiscourse markers and linguistic features in the opinion texts in British and Saudi press. Gender is often found to be "an influential feature in various social interactions as men and women have different preferences for the linguistic features they use in expressing themselves and interacting with others" (Tse and Hyland, 2006, p.177). This was evidenced in previous research (West, 1984; Holmes, 1988; Herring *et al*., 1995; Tannen, 1994; Tse and Hyland, 2006). Findings of the present study identified some interesting gender variations among columnists in their linguistic choices and a clear pattern of gender preferences in their interactional choices of metadiscourse. While gender was not seen to be a key variable in columnists' interactive choices of metadiscourse, as these choices were heavily influenced by the genre's conventions, gender was an important source of variation that influenced the linguistic and the stylistic choices of opinion columnists. For example, there was a broad gender difference in the use of self-mentions, engagement markers, adjectives, pronouns, and adverbs with female columnists making far more use of these features than their male columnists. In addition, male writers were more likely to use hedges, articles, swear words, and numerical terms than female

writers. Our results were consistent with previous research of gender variation (Lakoff, 1975; Hiatt, 1977; Pennebaker and King, 1999; Koppel *et al*., 2002; Argamon *et al*., 2003; Groom & Pennebaker, 2005; Friginal, 2009). The findings of the present study provided evidence of gender-preferential metadiscoursal and linguistic choices in the discourse of opinion columns. This study argued that gender is a significant source of variation as it influences the linguistic and the stylistic choices of columnists along with other important variables including the cultural, the social, and the situational context in which language is used and in which these opinion columns are written. "Language choices are always made from culturally available resources and therefore involve interactions between the conventional practices of the literacy event, the ways that communities structure and maintain their interests, and the values, beliefs and prior cultural experiences of the participants" (Hyland, 2008, p, 1234). According to Tse & Hyland (2006), the language we draw on to express a stance and engage our readers is likely influenced by a range of social and experiential factors, and gender is among the most significant of these because of its overarching influence.

Conclusion* 2: *Metadiscourse is a Major Feature of Communication in Journalistic Discourse

The present study furnishes evidence of the predominance of metadiscourse in the journalistic genre of opinion columns with **33,854** metadiscourse tokens in the corpus, an average of **105.49** occurrences per opinion column or **3** elements of metadiscourse in every **25** words in each of the two corpora: British and Saudi. Findings unveiled that metadiscourse markers are key aspects of opinion texts that play a major role in the ways columnists communicate their intended messages. In addition, results showed that interactive devices used to assist comprehension such as transitions and code glosses were more frequent in Saudi texts, whereas interactional devices used to assist

persuasion, such as hedges, boosters, and self-mentions, were more frequent in British texts. Higher frequencies of interactive choices in Saudi's columns, especially transitions and code glosses, show that Saudi writers recognized the potential need of their readers, whose mother tongue language is not English, and guide them through the texts. In other words, Saudi columnists consider their readers, address their needs, aid their understanding and seek to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and ideas as clearly as possible through the extensive use of interactive language choices. In contrast, the predominance of interactional devices in British texts revealed that British writers focus more directly on the targeted readers. These interactional choices are prevalent in British texts because of "the important interactional work they do in creating a shared evaluative context in the which the reader can be led to the writer's viewpoint" (Tse and Hyland, 2006, p. 183). According to Hyland (2005a), interactional metadiscourse tends to be a feature of overtly argumentative and persuasive genres. In sum, interactive and interactional metadiscourse are key features of the journalistic discourse of opinion columns. They are used as means of organizing the discourse, aiding comprehension and understanding, and helping columnists to create meanings and negotiate their ideas with readers. They are vital to the success of the column as its propositional content and for Crismore, they are even "as **important to successful communication** as are semantics and syntax" (1989, p.5).

Conclusion 3: Metadiscourse is Context-Dependent

Metadiscoursal choices are highly influenced by the discourse genre and the context, which involves the intended readers. According to Hyland (2000), a central aspect of metadiscourse is its context-dependency, the close relationship it has to the norms and expectations of those who use it in particular settings. Findings of the present study provided evidence that generally the patterns of metadiscourse use are largely

consistent in the opinion texts of British and Saudi writers due to genre conventions. While some significant gender differences were reported, men and women writers showed a greater tendency of using quite similar metadiscourse resources in the discourse of opinion columns. Therefore, it is possible to state that metadiscourse is context-dependent and is linked to the journalistic conventions of opinion column writing. For example, the low frequencies of evidentials in the whole corpus are due to the absence of citations, which is not usually associated with the genre of opinion columns. Similarly, the semi-absence of endophoric markers is closely related to the short nature of opinion columns. In addition, extensive use of personal pronouns and self-mentions is another proof that the use of metadiscourse is constrained by the genre of opinion columns. These personal pronouns produce a sense of solidarity with the readers and contribute to a writer-reader relationship. Therefore, the use of personal pronouns is a key characteristic of opinion writing that leads to effective communication with readers. "Opinion columns not only use personal pronouns and even personal anecdotes, they require them. The writing is all about communicating a distinctive personality both in content and style, the more distinctive, the better" (Coward, 2013, p. 35). This conclusion is in line with previous literature of metadiscourse which stressed that metadiscourse is context dependent and it is linked to the norms and conventions of a particular genre (Mauranen, 1993; Hyland, 1998; Fuertes-Olivera *et al*., 2001; Hyland, 2005; Ädel, 2006). Fuertes-Olivera *et al*., (2001), argued that metadiscourse is context-dependent and it is linked to the norms and expectations of a particular setting, and that it is genre-constrained. Hyland (1998) highlighted that metadiscourse is critically dependent on the rhetorical context and it is strictly related to the discourse community and the genres that develop within it. Hyland (2005), stressed the important link between metadiscourse and its context,

"Because metadiscourse represents the social purposes of writers it is a *social act* rather than simply a string of *language* items, and this means that its use will vary enormously depending on the audience, the purpose and other aspects of the social context" (Hyland, 2005a, p.87).

***Conclusion 4*: Gender is a Determinant of Style (Men's and Women's Language)**

The present study provides evidence of gender-based variations between male and female columnists regarding their topic choice and style of writing. Findings showed that the corpus, although collected randomly, exhibited a clear pattern of gender differences in topic choice in the opinion texts of British and Saudi columnists. Men, in both corpora, were more likely than women to address wider topics like politics, sports, finance, economics, crimes, history, technology and other traditionally masculine topics, whereas women were more likely to write about family, fashion, cookery, personal relationships, domesticity, and 'feminine' concerns. Findings of this study support previous research (Tannen, 1990; Bischoping, 1993; Fehr, 1996; Soler, 2004; Newman *et al*., 2008), which reported a clear pattern of gender difference in topic preferences.

Findings also reported statistical significant gender differences in the linguistic and the stylistic choices of columnists. Male-authored longer texts contained more verbs, more numerical terms, more swear words, more articles, and more prepositions. Male columnists relied more on facts, empirical evidence, and verifiable materials. Consequently, men columnists adopted a more information-oriented, objective, and impersonal style in their opinion texts. Female-authored texts, in contrast, contained more adjectives, more adverbs, more personal pronouns, and more gender nouns. Female-authored texts were more subjective, more involved, more emotional, personal,

descriptive and engaging. Women columnists adopt a more personal informal style that draws on their feminine experience and they establish a friendly contact with their readers. This study supported the findings of previous research (Aries & Johnson, 1983; Tannen, 1990; Herring & Paolillo, 2006) and confirmed the existence of men's and women's style in journalism. It could be concluded that gender is an important component of our lived experience and it is expected that it can influence the topics and the style columnists adopt in their journalistic writing. Men and women approach their column writing differently as a result of social and cultural practices. According to Hyland (2006), "the ways men and women use a language, in other words, are not determined by their gender but constructed, negotiated, and transformed through social practices informed by particular social settings, relations of power, and participation in disciplinary discourses"(p. 1246).

***Conclusion* 5: Opinion Writing is a Distinctive Form of Journalistic Discourse**

Findings revealed that opinion columns in both sets were often persuasive, clearly written, and well-constructed pieces of writing in which columnists speak directly to the audience and offer their opinions regarding a specific issue or a current event. In the 320 columns investigated, columnists, both genders, were experienced journalists expressing their opinions about the contemporary world-system, balancing between subjectivity and objectivity, drawing on their personal experiences and establishing a special relation with a wider readership. Columnists in their opinion pieces analyze facts, offer advice, support claims, provide prescriptions for righting wrongs, do research, gather information, and select topics that appealed to the readers. "Columnists are a key part of the paper's overall personality, constituting its intellectual praetorian guard" (Glover, 1999, p. 295). The data of the study provide evidence that these opinion pieces were informative, reader-friendly, well-organized, well-researched,

original, persuasive and appealing texts. According to Pape & Featherstone (2006), "personal columns and the views expressed in them are part of a newspaper's personality. Certainly, they are one of the very few places where a dialogue is established between reader and writer and, as such they have an important role in establishing the personality and soul of a paper" (p. 89). Although opinion columns are the experience and the thoughts of a signed individual, these columns reflect social attitudes and view points because they are written by independent experts and authorities from various vantage points in society (Macnamara, 2006). Opinion columns, by addressing our human needs, are a true reflection of our different societies, influencing our reactions to issues in our daily life and presenting a useful guide to cope with modern life.

***Conclusion* 6: Culture is a Source of Variation in Newspaper Opinion Writing**

The findings drawn from the comparative analysis between British and Saudi columnists confirmed the existence of differences in their use of metadiscourse markers. Generally, British writers employed far more interactional than interactive metadiscourse, whereas Saudi writers used more interactive than interactional forms. British writers showed deep concern about the readers and were more determined to encourage readers to engage with the topic, establish a credible identity, allow more space for alternative voices, and produce a more personal piece of writing. In contrast, Saudi writers paid more attention to devices organizing the discourse, assisting the readers' comprehension, and offering more clues to the intended messages. For example, Saudi writers employed higher frequencies of additive markers and code glosses in their opinion texts than British writers. This is unsurprising since Saudi writers more frequently built their argumentation by adding evidence to the original claim using a progressive approach. This can be linked to mother tongue influence and

Arabic culture where addition and elaboration of ideas are common language structures in Arabic. Elaboration which is the addition of more formal information can make the text "more easily comprehensible by the addition of more clues to the message" (Al-Sharqāwī, 2010, p. 204). Other cultural differences were reported between British and Saudi columnists in terms of language and style. For example, Saudi columnists favoured a more formal language in their opinion texts. Saudi texts were characterized by the use of formal Standard English, standard grammatical structures, lower use of self-references, and absence of colloquialism and conversational expressions. British texts, in contrast, contain more colloquial terms, more short forms, and more self-references and were generally characterized by a conversational tone and an informal subjective friendly style. It is possible to conclude that these variations between British and Saudi columnists in style and language use can be attributed to different cultural backgrounds and experiences. "Cultural factors help shape our background understandings, or schema knowledge, and are likely to have a considerable impact on what we write and how we organize what we write, and our responses to different communicative contexts" (Hyland, 2005a, p. 114).

Contributions of the study

The present study has attempted to explore two significant concepts from two rich fields in a distinctive journalistic discourse. First, it addressed the potential influence of gender in newspaper opinion writing, and identified possible gender-based variations between male and female columnists in their linguistic, stylistic and metadiscoursal choices. Second, it focused on the concept of metadiscourse by examining the similarities and differences of metadiscourse resources in the opinion texts of British and Saudi columnists, and identified possible gender-preferential and cultural-

preferential choices. This study contributes modestly to the large field of language and gender by investigating the role of gender in shaping the linguistic and the stylistic choices of columnists in the journalistic discourse of opinion columns. Results supported the view that gender is a significant factor that can influence the linguistic and the stylistic choices of writers, in addition to other social and cultural values and beliefs.

The study also adds to the existing body of knowledge in the rapidly growing field of metadiscourse, by investigating interactive and interactional metadiscourse in the journalistic discourse of British and Saudi opinion columns. The present study has explored metadiscourse in an area which has received little attention from linguists and language scholars. The discourse of opinion columns offers a rich source of authentic written data which can be used for different avenues of investigation. According to Hyland (2005a), metadiscourse studies have largely focused on a limited number of academic genres such as research articles, textbooks and dissertations, but it is important to see how interactions work in other kinds of texts. Therefore, it is hoped that the present study fills this gap in metadiscourse studies and sheds more light on the ways writers organize their texts, and engage their readers. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study which explored gender and metadiscourse in Saudi English newspapers columns, analyzed linguistic, stylistic, and topical choices of men and women columnists. The novelty of this study was confirmed by *King Fasial Centre for Research and Islamic Studies.* KFCRIS is the official center of academic research in Saudi Arabia and has specialized databases that are connected to libraries and universities all over the world. It is one of the largest bibliographic databases in the Arab world with over 1,200,000 subject headings. In addition, this study has been accepted by '**Metadiscourse Across Genres 2017'** conference, which will be held on

Thursday, 30 March 2017-01 April 2017 in Cyprus. The plenary speakers of MAG 2017 are Prof. Ken Hyland, Prof. Anna Mauranen and Prof. Anneline Ädel.

The current study hopefully is also a recent addition to the growing area of journalism studies. The study provided extensive linguistic analysis of **320** opinion columns collected from four elite newspapers from two countries. It also identified gender-preferential styles of writing and confirmed the existence of "women's style" in a male-dominated field. According to Stange *et al*. (2011), women's style in journalism exploits a highly personal and confessional approach in which women journalists appear more likely to draw on women as sources and focus on social problems and issues associated with women such as reproductive rights, and childcare. It is evident in the corpus that women columnists often hold a personal voice, present a subjective experience, avoid formal abstractions, and discuss feminine issues and concerns.

Moreover, findings drawn from the present study hopefully provided useful insights and important implications for cross-cultural comparisons and genre characterization. The present study showed that newspaper opinion texts were pure representations of cultural and social values that reflect two distinct cultures: the Western British and the Eastern Saudi. Generally, British columns were influenced by the industrial, the social, and the civilized aspects of British culture. In the same manner, Saudi texts were highly shaped by the deeply Islamic, conservative, traditional, and family oriented culture.

Recommendation for Further Research

The concepts of gender and metadiscourse remain a fertile area of investigation for future research and many further research avenues can be carried out. First, the genre of newspaper opinion columns has received little attention in the literature, it would be

interesting to approach this neglected journalistic discourse using a critical discourse analysis in order to delineate the genre's features more precisely, and provide important insights about the argumentative threads and the social practices in these opinion texts. Another study can approach the genre of opinion columns using content-analysis tools to compare and contrast print opinion columns with the emerging online opinion columns in terms of style and language use.

Second, the interaction between journalistic genres and gender is still largely unexplored and obviously some research can be done dealing with the interaction between editorials, opinion columns, reports and gender to investigate the impact of gender on different journalistic discourses. Further research can be done exploring the interaction between magazine columns, newspaper columns, online blogs and gender in order to examine the influence of gender in these various discourses.

Third, metadiscourse is still a new field of investigation which holds potential for much linguistic, comparative, and contrastive research. Metadiscourse research has largely focused on academic discourses, but it would be interesting to explore resources of metadiscourse in other discourses and genres. For example, a study could investigate interactive and interactional metadiscourse in children's literature and explore the ways that young readers are guided and how persuasion is accomplished in these types of texts. The work on metadiscourse can be also extended to investigate tourists' brochures, short stories, emails, and political and religious speeches in order to identify which types of metadiscourse predominate in these genres and provide useful insights about the features that make them more effective and powerful. In addition, further research can be carried out to test the possible universality of metadiscourse. A study can investigate the potential validity of metadiscourse categories across languages. Similarly, cross-cultural studies and cross-disciplinary studies can explore variations

among writers of different cultural and disciplinary backgrounds in employing categories of metadiscourse and achieving different purposes.

Fourth, the current study can be extended to include the pragmatic functions achieved by the use of metadiscourse devices in the opinion texts of both columnists. This can be done by applying a qualitative content analysis which aims to explore the functions of interactive and interactional metadiscourse in British and Saudi opinion texts.

Finally, there are few diachronic studies in the literature of metadiscourse and some new research is needed in order to trace the change in metadiscourse patterns and other textual features over time. Some work can be done to explore the change of use of metadiscourse devices in newspaper opinion columns of the past century and the current twenty-first century. Other research can analyze patterns of change and metadiscourse markers in various types of professional writing documents.

In sum, the previous research suggestions present only a small amount of the broad multiple avenues that gender and metadiscourse research can cover. The interaction between gender and metadiscourse in spoken and written discourses is still a rich potential that promises a rich future research agenda.

Finally, columnists constructed carefully crafted persuasive pieces of journalistic discourse about the ways we react in this world drawing on an infinite range of resources. Their language choices are highly influenced by personal, social, cultural and institutional factors. There are often preferred patterns and variations in these language choices, which make us able to make correct judgements about the gender and the identity of the writer.

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